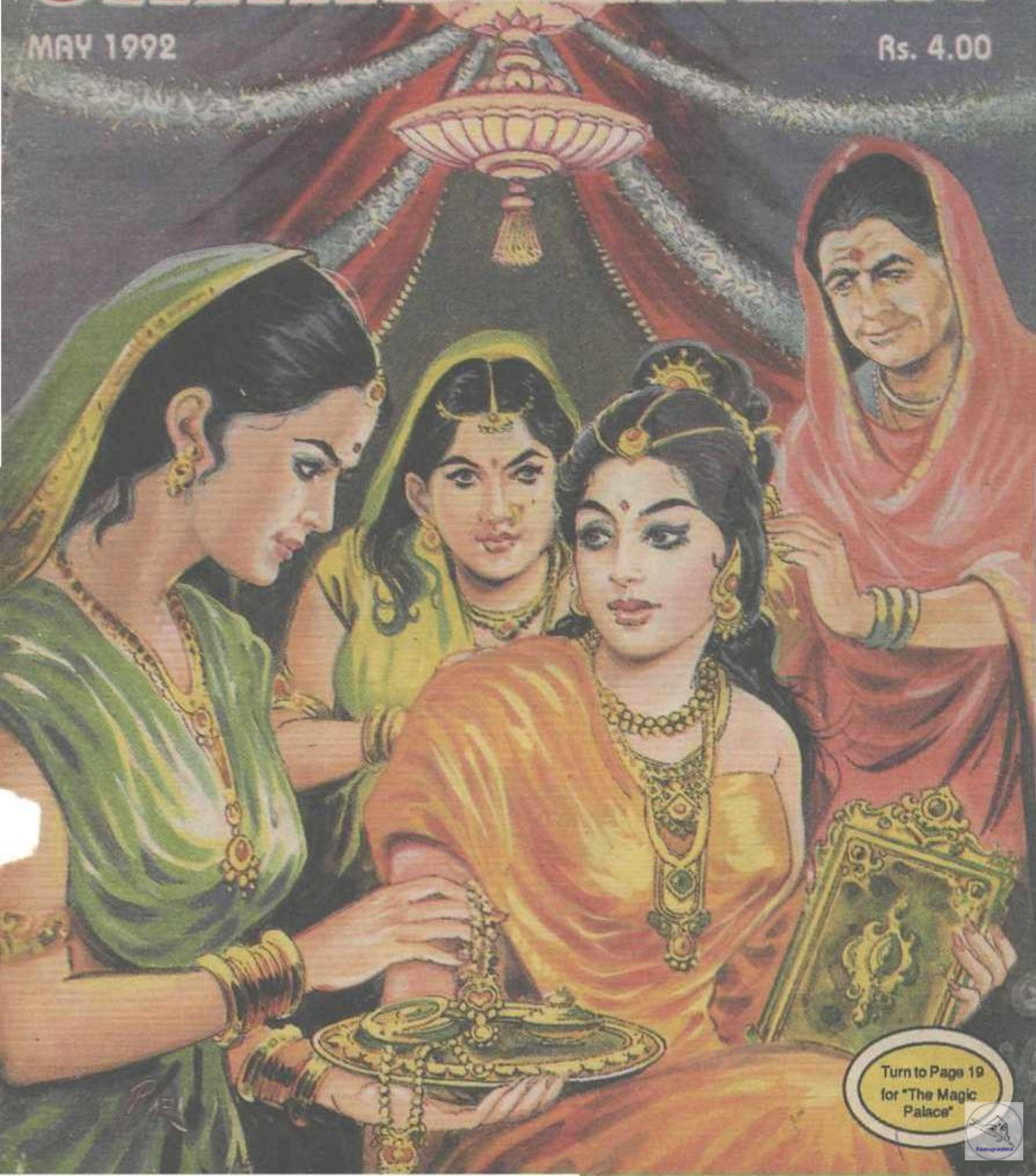


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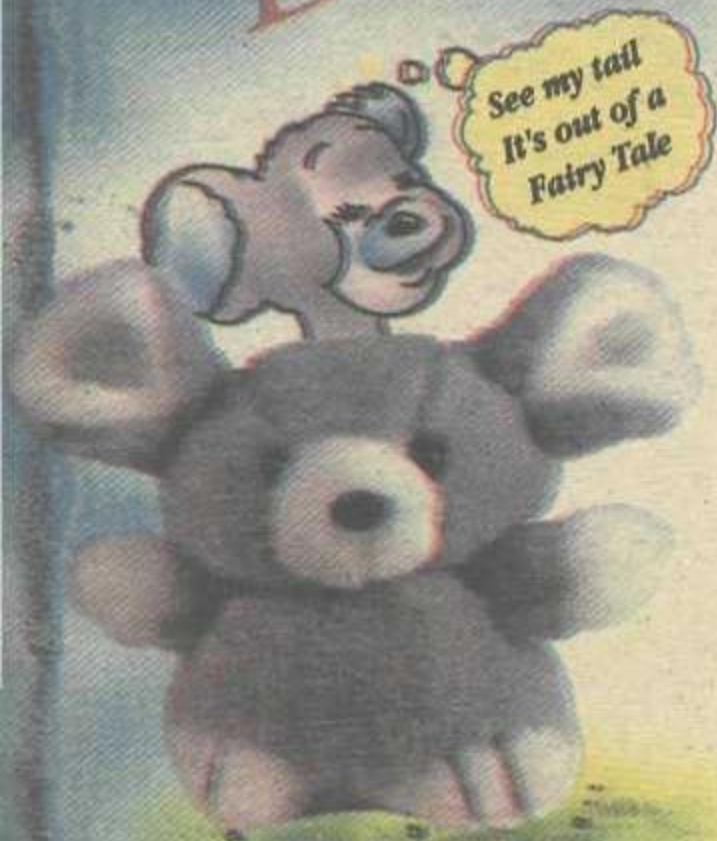
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Don't you owe the



See my tail
It's out of a
Fairy Tale



Nice 'n' funny
I'm a Bunny



Your Bear Hugs
are warmer
than mine



Foxy is my name
But I'm ob-so tame



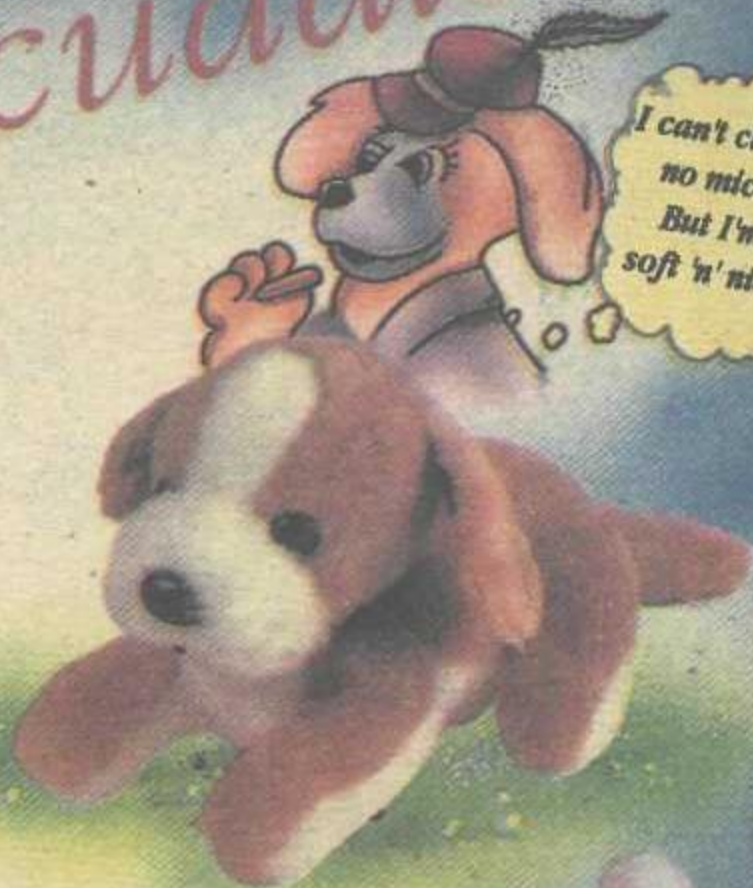
Tom
Tom



Little one a cuddles?



Give the
Lil' Panda
a Handa



I can't chas
no mice
But I'm
soft 'n' nice



No carrots to eat
But I'm a treat



hug me tight
I'll give you
de

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**And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!**

NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 22 JUNE 1992 No. 12

THE MAGIC PALACE: Princess Vidyavati is woken up by Kamala. The boatman has come to take them to the palace. The king is unwell and desires to see her. It is a misty night. Vidyavati does not realise that the boat is taking an unusually long time to reach the shore. A palanquin awaits her when she alights. Inside she falls asleep, only to wake up when she finds that the palanquin-bearers are climbing a mountain. Where is she being taken? she wonders. And where is Kamala?

VEER HANUMAN: Nala is put in charge of the bridge to be built across the sea. Everybody gets busy collecting materials for the bridge. The bridge is ready in five days. Hanuman carries Rama on his shoulders, while Angada carries Lakshmana. As they walk over the bridge, accompanied by the Vanara army, their thoughts are full of the strategies they should employ once they reach Lanka. Ravana's emissary, Suka, rushes back to him and pleads with him to release Sita. Ravana is furious.

SREELEKHA, the young composer-conductor, is featured in **CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT.** Plus other regular features.

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Controlling Editor.
NAGI REDDI



Founder:
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A More Beautiful World

One thought that should be in the mind of every human being is, how best to make the world more beautiful. World is not merely the geographical entity that we know of — the land, the mountains, the rivers, and the oceans that fill the world. World also comprises the trees and plants, the animals and birds, and even the millions and millions of insects that live in it. One should also not leave out the human beings who people the world.

They— the human beings — are, of course, different from all others. They have the power to think, to discriminate between good and bad, and also to reason whether their thoughts, words, and actions would be for the benefit and happiness of themselves as well as others. "The mind in its own place can make a heaven of hell, and a hell of heaven" says that great poet, John Milton.

It is, therefore, clear that it lies within the power of man to *mar* the beauty of the world, or to *make* it more beautiful. The way we live in the world can make all others happy, and that is how we can also make the world more beautiful.

The Creator above has set the pattern of life for everything else in the world. The way man lives is, however, to be decided by himself.

New Chapter for Mauritius



The Queen of England is no more the head of state in Mauritius. On March 12 last, the country "bade good-bye" to the English monarch and became a full-fledged republic. However, it will continue to be a member of the British Commonwealth, like India.

Exactly 24 years ago - on March 12, 1968 - Mauritius gained independence from British rule, but the Queen was represented by the Governor-General chosen by her. The first Prime Minister was Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, who is popularly held as the Father of the Nation. He was succeeded

in 1982 by Mr. Aneerood Jugnauth, who took a pledge to make Mauritius a republic within the Commonwealth.

The country got its first non-British head of state in 1983 when Sir Seewoosagur was made Governor-General. Following his death in 1985, Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo became Governor-General. After the 1987 elections, Mr. Jugnauth formed a coalition government. He will continue as Prime Minister, while Sir Veerasamy has been re-designated as President. The constitution of the new republic will be modelled on

India's, though its Parliament will have only one House.

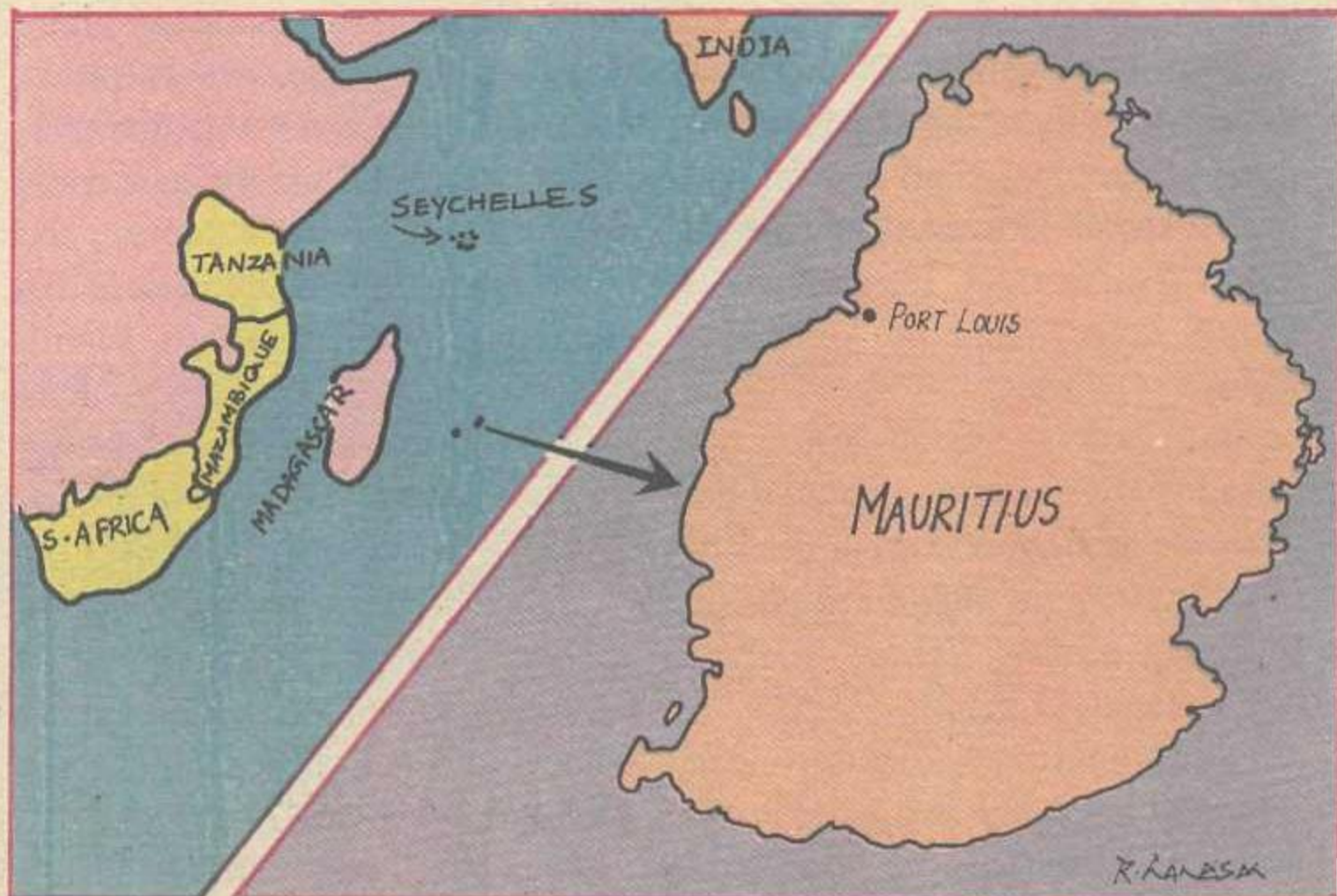
The 1865 sq.km. island of Mauritius lies east of the much bigger (587, 000 sq.km.) Madagascar off the African coast. Arab navigators are believed to have discovered the island sometime in the 10th century. Six centuries later, the Portuguese landed there, followed by the Dutch towards the close of the 16th century. The Dutch settlers started agriculture and used the island for trade purposes. A hundred years later, they left the island which was then occupied by France, from whom Britain took over in 1810. Mauritius was a British territory till it got its independence a century-and-half later.

Some 68 per cent of its 1.1 million population is of Indian origin. While English and French are official languages, Tamil, Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, and Bhojpuri are commonly

used. There are quite a few satellite islands surrounding Mauritius and every island has temples dedicated to Siva, Ganesh, and Muruga. The annual Thai Poosam Kavadi and Chitra Kavadi festivals, complete with Nadaswaram and Thavil (popularly called Madras trumpets and drums), draw large crowds. Maha Sivratri, Holi and Diwali, too, are celebrated.

Described by tourists as the 'Pearl in the Indian Ocean,' Mauritius is famous for its Pamplemousses botanical gardens, which have the exotic talipot palm flowering once in 60 years and the water lilies looking like giant floating dishes, and an old volcanic crater more than 200m wide and 5m deep.

The scenic beauty of Mauritius prompted the well-known American writer, Mark Twain (1835-1910) to remark "Heaven was copied after Mauritius."





Test For Truth

King Satyasheel of Samudrapur was an able ruler. One day, some of the gentry in his land were sitting with him on the terrace of the palace. Suddenly, he pointed towards the sky and said, "Looks like the 'Pushpak' chariot is coming this way."

One of the gentry, Chandrahas, looked intently at the sky for some time. He could see no chariot, not even a speck. However, he told the king, "You're right. It's Pushpak. I should compliment on your eyesight."

Prabhakar seconded him. "My friend is right. In fact, it's only because we've the good fortune of being in your company that we're able to see such sights. You're really a blessed soul, O King!

"It is doubtful whether anyone of them did have any idea what Pushpak was or how it looked like. Still

they were uniform in their praise of the king. They knew very well how much they stood to gain if they were to shower such praise on the king. They would be able to remain close with the king and that would ensure their status and position in the land.

There was among them Gnanasekhar, son of the royal priest, who would not agree with them. He was an educated person and could see through the others' game.

The king did not fail to notice that he alone had remained silent. "Gnanasekhar, I see you're silent. Didn't you see the Pushpak chariot flying this way? Yet, you didn't say anything."

"To be honest, your majesty," he answered the king reluctantly, "I was about to say something. But I wondered whether you might not get angry when you heard me."

"Don't hold any such fear," King

Satyasheel assured him. "Whatever you wish to say, you may say it boldly."

Gnanasekhar looked at the king for a minute. "Your majesty, to be frank, I didn't see any chariot in the sky. I'm sure you were merely imagining things."

"A figment of my imagination, did you say?" the king appeared not fully convinced. "I can't believe it! Didn't you hear all these friends say that they saw the Pushpak chariot? You alone say there was no chariot. Could you explain?"

"We've only read about Pushpak in our epics," said Gnanasekhar most humbly. "The people who wrote the epics must have created such things out of their imagination. Learned people like you, your majesty, know this truth. Perhaps what you thought you saw was just some hallucination. Nothing real. You must also be

aware why none of them contradicted you!"

"Well said, Gnanasekhar!" remarked the king. "What you said is true. I never saw any flying chariot, nor any *gandharva* riding on it. I was only trying to find out who among you would be truthful while describing what's happening in my kingdom. That's why I told a deliberate lie. When I mentioned the chariot, nobody dared correct me. Instead, they had only praise for me and my eyesight! If a king were to depend on people like them, he would only fall into disrepute. You were bold enough to tell the truth. From today, you'll be my official confidant. All the others may go now; you'd better keep away from me!"

As they all got up to go, King Satyasheel smiled at Gnanasekhar.





THEY SEARCH THEM AGAIN BUT CANNOT FIND ANYTHING ON THEM.



SO, THE GEMS MUST BE IN THEIR STOMACHS!



THE ROBBER CHIEF ORDERS HIS MEN TO CUT OPEN THE STOMACHS OF HIS CAPTIVES. THE TRAMP...



KARATAKA CONCLUDES THE STORY...



अपराधो न मेज्जतीति नैतद् विश्वासकारणम् ।
विद्यते हि नृशंसेभ्यो भयं गुणवतामपि ॥



A person should not rest assured that he is safe because he has done no harm to anybody. Even the virtuous has to dread the wicked.

AND LANDS ON HIS
FACE...



KARATAKA ENDS THE
STORY THUS...



YOU SEE, NONE SHOULD
MAKE FRIENDS WITH
FOOLS, LIKE YOU.



FELLOWS LIKE YOU AD-
VISES EVIL PLANS, MAKE
ENEMIES OF FRIENDS,
AND CAUSE TROUBLE TO
EVERYBODY.



SHUT UP! I'M FED UP WITH
YOUR PREACHING.
GOODBYE!



MEANWHILE, KING PIN-
GALAKA AND SANJIVAKA
THE BULL ARE ENGAGED
IN A DEADLY FIGHT



ONCE DEAR FRIENDS, THE
TWO ARE NOW FIGHTING
FOR THEIR LIVES.



I'LL KILL YOU!

OH!



OH! HOW CRUEL OF ME!
I'VE KILLED MY BEST
FRIEND! AND RUINED
MYSELF!



अर्थनाशं मनस्तापं गृहे दुश्चरितानि च ।
वञ्चनं चापमानं च मतिमान् न प्रकाशयेत् ॥

DAMANAKA APPROACHES KING PINGALAKA...

SOB... SOB... SOB...

OH! MASTER!



DO YOU FEEL UNHAPPY AFTER KILLING A TREACHEROUS ENEMY? I'VE KILLED MY BEST FRIEND! SOB... SOB... I'LL NEVER BE FORGIVEN! SOB....



MY LORD! EVEN A KING'S BROTHER, IF HE IS A TRAITOR, MUST BE KILLED WITH OUT MERCY.



YOU'RE NO ORDINARY BEING! YOU'RE A KING. DON'T GRIEVE LIKE THAT. YOU'RE THE LAW-MAKER!



MEAN- WHILE KARATAKA ENTERS...

OH! MASTER! DON'T LISTEN TO HIM.

HE HAS ALREADY BROUGHT DISASTER ON YOU.



YOU'VE PLACED YOUR LIFE IN JEOPARDY BY HEEDING DAMANAKA'S ADVICE.



AND, MY LORD! YOU'VE KILLED YOUR BEST FRIEND.



SOB... SOB.... YES! YOU'RE RIGHT! I'M RUINED... SOB...



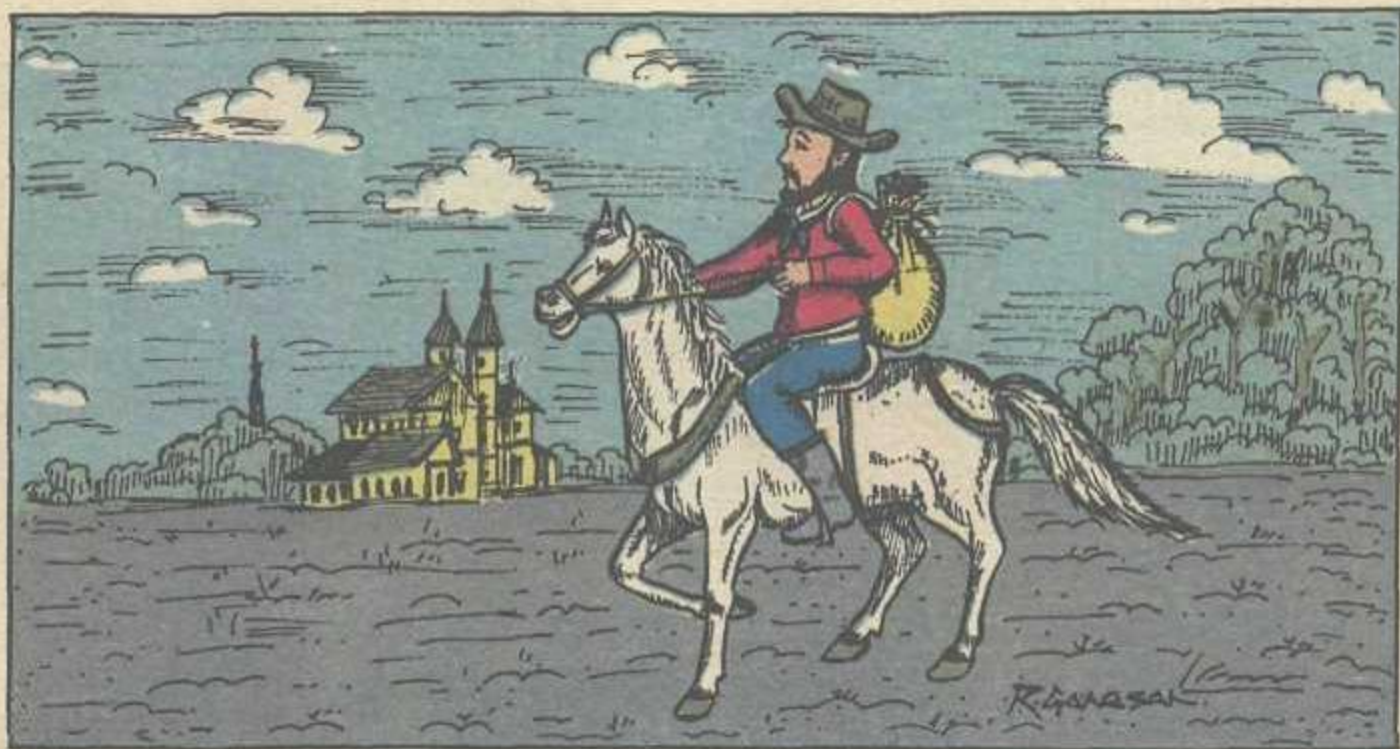
To Continue

A man with a sound sense does not go about speaking of his financial loss, of his agony, of scandal in his family, of his being deceived or of his humiliation

TOWARDS BETTER ENGLISH

The P's and Q's and the Post

Pradeep Kumar Purohit, of Phulbani, was reading Gandhiji's autobiography in which he came across the expression "Ps and Qs of a man". The exact idiom is "to mind one's P's and Q's", which simply means, to be particular about one's language and behaviour. When you mind your P's and Q's, you are very careful not to say anything impolite, and you put on your best behaviour. The origin of this informal expression is obscure. Perhaps, if reader Pradeep Kumar goes through Gandhiji's lines again, he can understand who the Mahatma was referring to and whether he maintained the same relationship with that person.



R. Vishwanath, of Bangalore, seems to have received a letter from his friend seeking a reply "per return". Fortunately, we are not living in the days when a rider on a horse carried letters from one place to another. The rider and the horse would take rest before they resumed their journey back home, carrying letters from that place to the people in their own city or town. Whenever people needed a speedy reply, they would ask for a letter to be sent *by return* (of the horse). Later on, the horse and the rider were replaced by the horse-carriage which took both people as well as a bag of mail. Soon there arose the expression *post-haste*. Because unless one hastened with the reply, it might miss the carriage when it went back. These days, people ask for "a reply by return of post".



THE MAGIC PALACE

2

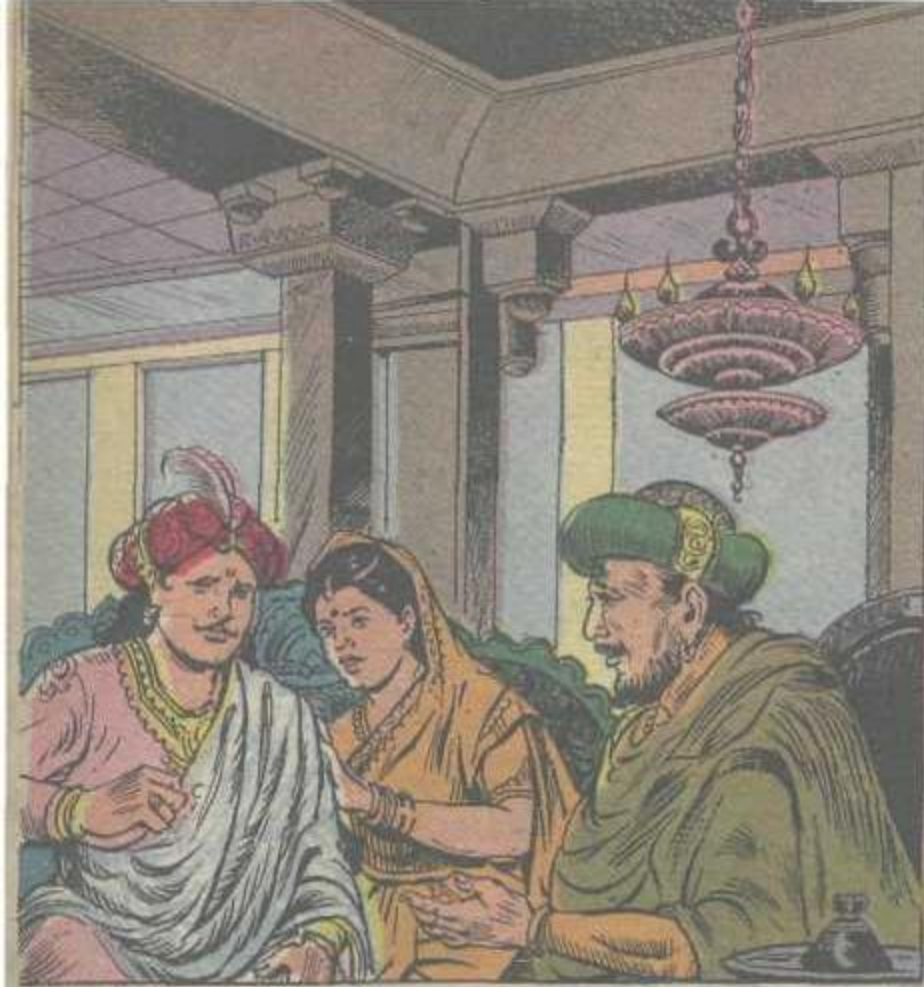
(Veergiri is getting ready for the birthday festivities of Princess Vidyavati, now turning seventeen. Suddenly she takes ill, and all celebrations are cancelled. The Raj Vaidya says there is no cause for anxiety, but the Raj Jyotishi finds she is passing through bad times and advises a change of residence. She is taken to the royal resort on the island. Her mysterious disappearance from there shocks not only her parents but the entire kingdom. But how does it happen?)

King Veerasen and Queen Vajreswari, after escorting Princess Vidyavati up to the palace gates, walked back to the palace, accompanied by their bodyguards. The time was well past midnight. The streets, which should have been illuminated for the princess's birthday, were dark except for the street lamps here and there. The city slept;

there was no revelry, no rejoicing, as would otherwise have happened if the usual festivities had taken place.

Both the king and queen were silent, but the king could hear heavy sighs from his beloved. She managed to control her tears till they reached their chambers. Once there, Queen Vajreswari just dropped her-

THE PRINCESS DISAPPEARS



self on the bed and wept aloud. "Vidyavati! My darling!" she wailed. "Why did you have to go away? How can I spend even one day without seeing you?"

Evidently, the queen was inconsolable. She was in a state of shock, being separated from her daughter after days of tension. Initially, it was her health that caused concern. Later, it turned out to be that the planets in her horoscope were playing havoc on her. The queen also could not completely wipe out the picture of the apparition from her mind. She earnestly believed that it forebode evil, but as she was not so sure whether it was an apparition at all,

she did not disclose her experience to anybody, not even to the king.

The king sat by her side and tried to console her. "My queen, I can very well understand your distress. If you must cry, do so, it'll give you some relief. I'm here with you, to share your grief. After all, Vidyavati is my daughter too, and you know how much she is dear to me, like any daughter attached to her father. But remember, we should not succumb to our sorrow. My subjects—they're also our children, aren't they?—they will be greatly upset when they hear about the princess. We must give them strength to bear their disappointment. After all, the Raj Vaidya has said there's nothing wrong with Vidyavati's health; and the Jyotishi has equally assured us that it is just a passing phase and our daughter would come out of it safe. Let's sacrifice our happiness for her sake; let's pray that she comes back to us soon, as sprightly as she had been all these years."

Queen Vajreswari listened to him through tearful gasps and sighs. She now slowly sat up in her bed, and wiped her tears. "But, my lord, when would we be able to go and see her? You must send someone to ask the Jyotishi tomorrow itself."

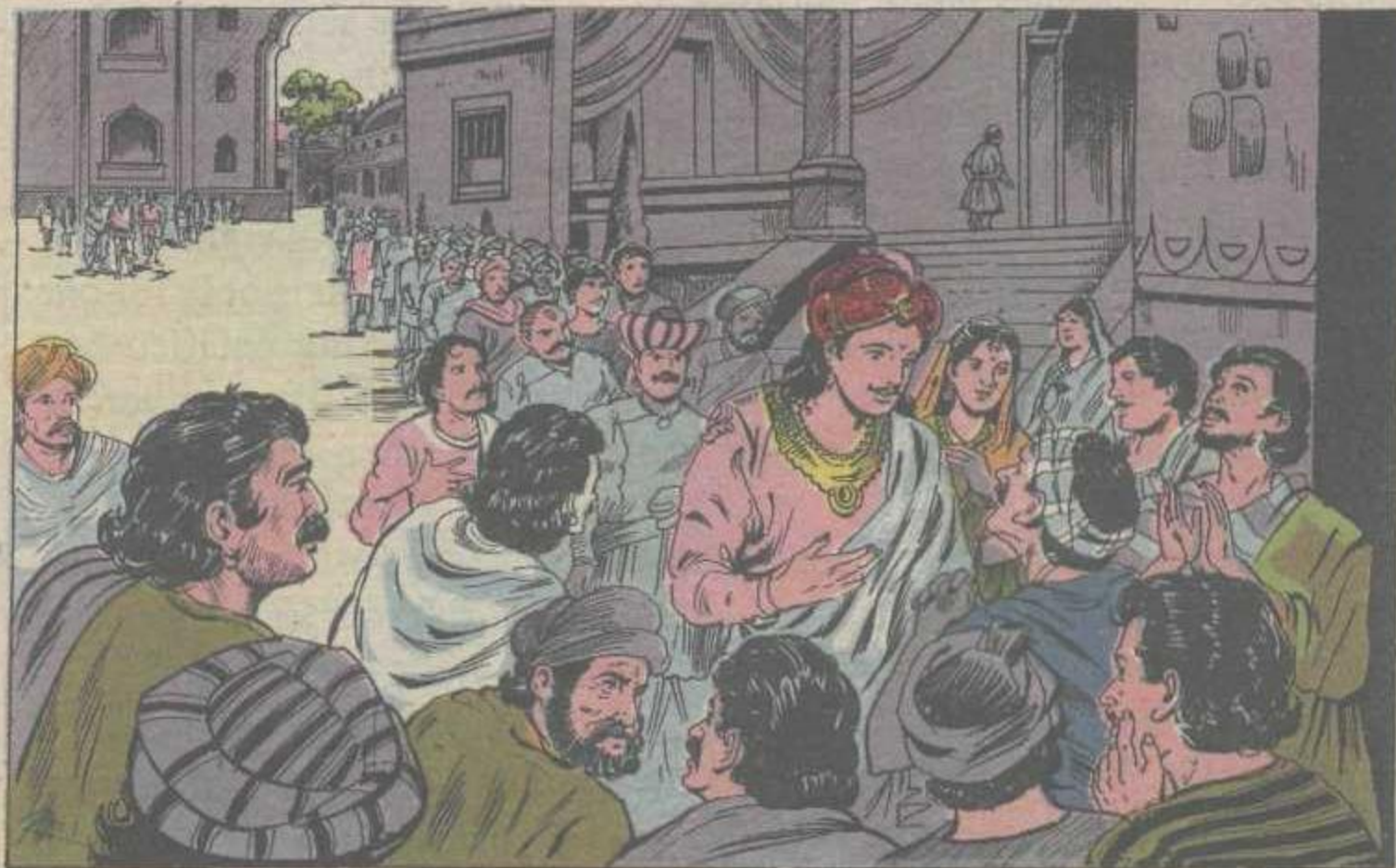
"Remember what the Jyotishi told us?" the king reminded her. "He would consult Acharya Jagatpati and tell us on what auspicious date we can go to the island. Let's leave all that to him, and let's also be patient. As he said, this is a penance for us, and if it can save our beloved child, we will have to go through that ordeal."

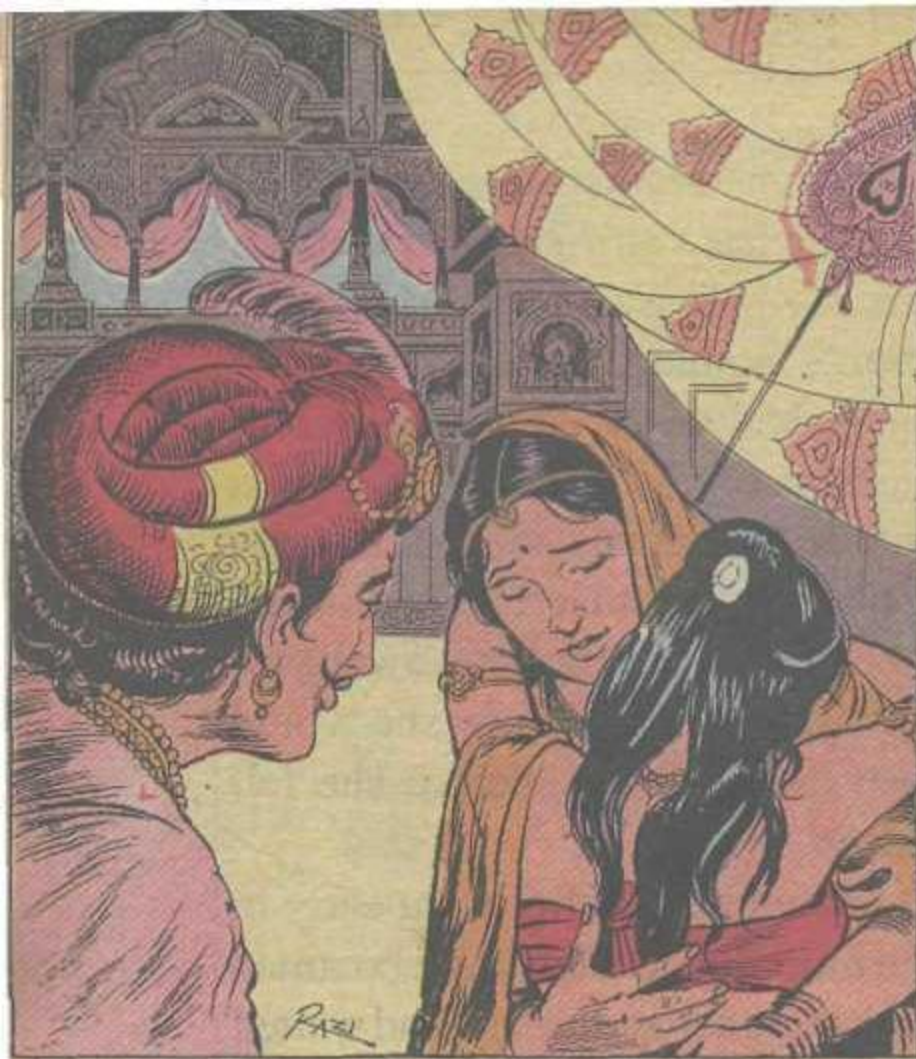
By then one of the maids, Shalini, came back with the boatman's message that the princess and maid Kamala had safely reached the island resort. "We wish the Raj Jyotishi had permitted Malini and me to stay with the princess, your majesty. We would have been more helpful to her. Old Kamala might find it too

much..."

The queen interrupted her. "No, Kamala has known Vidyavati from the day she was born. Moreover, there's nothing much to be done there. Vidyavati only needs complete rest and in a way, it'll be a change for Kamala, too." The queen waited till Shalini left the chambers, then got into bed, but kept awake for sometime thinking how she would face the daybreak, before she fell asleep.

Shalini and Malini went early in the morning, and the same boatman took them across the lake and waited in the boat to bring them back. They found that Vidyavati had had a restful night. They helped her to take





her bath and to eat her food. The two of them really wanted to be with the princess for a longer while, but as the queen had specifically asked them not to spend more time than was necessary, they went back to the palace where the king and queen were eagerly awaiting news about their daughter. They were happy to be told that the change of place had already started showing its effect on the princess.

The routine continued. Two other maids, Nandini and Devayani, visited the princess on the second day; the next day it was the turn of Shanta and Sharada. Every day the maids

brought more and more reassuring news of the princess's speedy recovery.

Almost three weeks passed. The king and queen waited patiently to hear from the Raj Jyotishi as to when they could visit the princess. When the servants told them that Acharya Vachaspati was waiting for an audience, King Veerasen asked them to bring in the Jyotishi immediately. A look at their sorrow-stricken faces was enough to tell him how anxiously they were awaiting his arrival. He gave them a reassuring smile. "Your majesties, you may call on the princess tomorrow. Anytime in the afternoon will be auspicious, but I would advise you to return to the palace before the sun sets."

"It has been a long wait, Jyotishiji," said Queen Vajreswari. "We both find it hard to bear the separation from our daughter."

"But my queen, it is only for one more day," the king pacified her, "and tomorrow we'll be with her. Be patient". He then turned to the Jyotishi. "Has there been any change in the planetary position, Jyotishiji? Did you consult your friend, Acharya Jagatpati? What does he say?"

"Your majesty, he has confirmed my doubts. The planets Jupiter,

Mars, and Saturn are in conjunction in the same house overlooking that of Moon, but the princess is right now under the benign influence of Sun. According to Jagatpati, this situation would prevail for another forty or fifty days, when the princess would also slowly regain strength. There's nothing that should cause both of you any unnecessary worry. I'm sure you'll feel greatly relieved after you see the princess tomorrow."

The next day was the twenty-first day of the princess's stay in the island palace. The king and queen decided to make the trip in the evening, after the princess had taken a rest in the afternoon. People lined up

their way as they went to board the boat.

At the island resort, they were received by Kamala, who led them to where the princess was sitting, combing her hair, as she had just then got up from bed. She was overjoyed to see her parents. They themselves were happy to find their daughter quite normal and thought that her face had brightened up. They took her out into the garden, where she walked with them for sometime. The queen all the time held the princess's hand. Well before it was dusk, they took leave of the princess. Kamala escorted them up to the boat.

Another three weeks passed before the Jyotishi found a propitious



date for their second visit to the princess. As she had heard from the maids about their visit, this time Vidyavati herself met them as they alighted from the boat. During the time they were with her, the king and queen avoided any talk of her health, as it was more than evident that the change had done her a lot of good. At her insistence, they stayed with her for a longer while and it was quite late in the evening when they returned to the palace.

A full three weeks passed and there was no message from the Raj Jyotishi. "Shall we not send someone to the Jyotishi, my lord?" the queen pleaded with the king.

"No, my queen," the king checked her. "These things are better left in the hands of the Jyotishi, and we should not be impatient. Remember, we're undergoing a penance for the well-being of our dear daughter. Let's wait for a day or two. After all, the maids have so far not brought any disconcerting news."

But they did not have to wait for long, because the Jyotishi came to the palace that very evening. He was accompanied by Acharya Jagatpati. The king was happy to see him, as there was one more person to reassure him of the princess's future. He received the Acharya with equal

reverence.

After introductions, the Raj Jyotishi told the king, "Your majesty, you may pay the next visit tomorrow early morning."

As the king tried to make out the urgency in the Jyotishi's words, Acharya Jagatpati interjected. "I'd even say, your majesty, you must. Because, the next auspicious day may not come up for another ninety days or so. The princess will be passing through a very bad period during the next three or four months. I'm not referring to her health... she'll be all right, I assure you, but..." jagatpati did not complete the sentence.

The queen was not present at that time, and the king was mentally planning a trip for the morning. So, he failed to notice the portent in the unfinished sentence. After the two Acharyas had departed, the king conveyed to the queen what the two Jyotishis had told him. "Didn't he explain, my lord, what he meant by bad times for Vidyavati?" the queen queried, anxiety writ large on her face.

"No," said the king. "Anyway we'll be seeing her tomorrow morning, and I shall send for Acharya Vachaspati after we come back. Don't worry, my queen."





The boatman was perplexed. It was unusual of the king and queen to visit their daughter so early in the morning. The sun was just rising in the horizon. There was no one to receive them at the steps leading to the island palace-neither the princess, nor maid Kamala. The royal couple did not take it amiss, because they had had no opportunity to inform them of a visit like that.

The king and queen found Kamala totally dazed. "So, you already heard about it, your majesty?" she asked, directing her question to both of them.

"What's it, Kamala?" Queen Vajreswari asked. "What has happened? Where's Vidyavati?"

"She... she... the princess... your majesty," Kamala faltered, "she's missing!"

"MISSING?" asked the king unbelievably. "Where? Where has she disappeared?"

"Your majesty," Kamala ex-

plained, "it was quite unlike of me. I seemed to have slept as if in a swoon. I woke up with a heavy head, but I managed to peep into the princess's room. She was not in her bed. She seems to have got up in a hurry. I looked for her everywhere, but she's not to be seen. She's in none of the rooms, nor is she in the garden."

"But where would she have gone?" the queen had just come out of the princess's room.

"Where could she have gone?" wondered King Veerasen.

The king and queen joined in the search once again, calling out, "Vidyavati!", "O princess!", "My Darling!" in turn. It was certain that Princess Vidyavati was not in the palace, or anywhere on the island.

The king went to the boatman and asked him to go and fetch the Commander-in-Chief.

- To continue.



World of Sport



Retired, unveiled

The number 32 will never be "seen in action" in National Basketball Championships in the U.S.A. That number has been "retired". It was the number given to one of basketball's greatest players, Earving Johnson. His brilliant career spanning 12 years came to a sudden end in February after he was found to be suffering from an incurable disease. He had captained Los Angeles Lakers for four championships, earning the epithet "Magic" Johnson. During the last match he



played for his team against Boston Celtics, at half-time, the portraits of four greats of Lakers were unveiled. A fifth portrait was an enframed "32". It has been decided that no player will wear that number as a tribute to Magic Johnson.

For your Record Book

Said Aouita of Morocco set a new world record in 3,000 metres (indoor) in a time of 7 min. 36.66 sec. at an international athletics meet in Athens on March 11. It bettered 7:37.31 set by Moses Kiptanui of Kenya in Seville the previous month.

Shots here, Shots there

James Wattana of Thailand had a record-breaking spell in British Open Snooker in Derby in February, when he "shot" 15 reds, 15 blacks, and the six colours in just 7 min. 9 sec, the fastest 147-break on record. His re-

markable achievement had some poignancy about it. Before he went in to play, he was told that his father had been shot

from close range; when he came out, he was informed that his father had succumbed to the injuries.



The Drum's Secret



King Rasaveera of Ratnapur ruled well and was very popular with his subjects. Their welfare was uppermost in his mind, and he would often remind his ministers to keep the interests of the people at heart always. He never allowed any laxity in administration; the kingdom thrived and the people of Ratnapur were happy.

Rasaveera had made it a practice to go round his kingdom in disguise at night. He wished to find out for himself whether his ministers were prompt in carrying out his orders,

and how happy and contented his subjects were. No one in the kingdom knew of these nocturnal travels of the king—no one, except his personal attendant, Satbir. Sometimes they posed as a wealthy merchant and his servant; on some days they would be close companions; at other times they would even feign as weary travellers. The king had great trust in Satbir.

One night, the king and his attendant happened to pass through a village at the outskirts of the capital. As they went by a house, Rasaveera



began smelling something quite tempting. But he could not place it; the smell was unfamiliar, something he did not remember to have ever experienced. "Did you get any strange smell, Satbir?" the king asked of his attendant.

Satbir noticed it only when the king told him about it. "Yes, Your Majesty," he said.

"What's it, then?" asked Rasaveera.

"It's the smell of chaff, Your Majesty," replied Satbir.

"Chaff of what?" the king was now curious. "Go and find out."

Satbir went up to the fence when he found in the dim light an old woman pounding paddy. He came back and told the king what he had seen.

"It has nice smell; it must be nice to eat as well!" remarked the king. Rasaveera must have enjoyed all kinds of delicious food one could ever imagine, but this smell was really tempting. "Come on, Satbir, let's go in and taste it."

The attendant was horrified. "Your Majesty, it's only chaff. It's either thrown away or given to cows and pigs. Nobody eats it," Satbir tried to dissuade the king from a possible misadventure.



No. King Rasaveera would not be dissuaded. "I must taste it, Satbir. You take me there!"

After all, it was an order from the king, and Satbir did not wish to earn his displeasure. So, the two went in and told the old woman that they had been walking for long and were hungry.

The woman received them with courtesy, spread a mat, and asked them to sit down while she went and fetched some water to drink first. She then apologetically said, "Brothers, I'm all alone here and I ate my meal long ago and there's nothing left in the kitchen. I was just pound-



ing paddy for tomorrow. How can I give you the chaff?"

Satbir answered for the king as well. "We both are very hungry. Don't worry, even the chaff will be enough. That'll be something before we resume our journey. We're sorry to have bothered you like this." The king appreciated the way his attendant tackled the situation.

The woman brought two plates of chaff sprinkled with some *gur*. King Rasaveera ate it with relish. As Satbir emptied the plate, he was trying to figure out how many cows he might have deprived of their meal. The two thanked the woman pro-

fusely and came out to walk back to the palace. The king did not make any comment about the dish of chaff that he ate. But he cautioned his attendant. "Remember, Satbir, you're the only one who knows of this incident. If you spill out this to anyone, you know what'll happen? You'll lose your head!"

Satbir could not easily shake off the memory of their adventure and he found it hard not to share the secret with someone. His wanderings with the king continued and he only prayed that they would not come across another smell that might tempt them to taste something unusual. For that matter, Satbir was now unable to relish even his normal food. Somehow he seemed to have lost all appetite. He got tired soon; he was very tense in the company of the king; and he was restless most of the time. He knew what the matter with him was. He was holding a secret that was acting as a big weight on his conscience and unless he shared it with someone, he might even die. 'If only I could speak out where no one would hear me, I might feel much better,' he told himself.

He walked up to the river, sat on a stone, and was about to shout, when a fisherman's boat went by.



He sat there for a long while. The moment he mustered courage, a boat would pass, and he would desist from his attempt to share the secret with the river. The next day, he roamed in the graveyard. Luckily, no cremation or burial was taking place and he was all alone in the quiet place. But soon the quietude became eerie for him and he lost all courage and went back home tense and worried.

The third day, Satbir went into the forest in the hope of sharing the secret with a tree. As he wandered deep and deeper, he came upon a tree with a big hollow. 'I won't find a safer listener than this tree,' he decided. He thrust his head into the hollow as much as possible and shouted, "Our king eats chaff! Do you hear me? Chaff! The king eats chaff!"

He quickly withdrew his head and started walking back home. He felt as if a heavy load had been taken off his chest. That day he was really hungry, had a good appetite, and ate well. He also slept well. He had no more tension and enjoyed his wanderings with the king.

Soon, preparations were on for the annual festival at the temple within the precincts of the palace.



The royal pipers and drummers were busy cleaning and tuning their instruments. The drummers wanted some of the old drums replaced. So, the king ordered new drums to be made. The drummers went in search of the proper kind of wood and came upon a tree with a huge hollow on it in the forest. The tree was felled and cut into the right size for the drums. At last the drums were ready.

The festival began in the morning in all splendour. There were *pujas* at select hours, besides music recitals and dance performances. The palace precincts were thrown open to the public, and people thronged the



temple to witness the festivities and receive the Lord's blessings.

In the evening the king himself was present with his entourage, Satbir included. The culmination of the festival was marked by an ensemble by the pipers and drummers. Somehow, everybody found that one of the drums was playing a discordant note. Instead of any rhythmic sounds the drum was heard shouting, "Our king eats chaff! Do you hear me? Chaff! The king eats chaff!" Every time the stick fell on the drum, out came the shout about the king and the chaff that he ate.

King Rasaveera did not wait for the festivities to conclude; he left the temple in a huff. At the palace, he sent for the drummer. When he came with his drum, the king asked him to play it in his presence. The drum repeated its beats — about the king and the chaff. It was then that King Rasaveera recognised the voice.

On a summons from the king,

Satbir went and stood before him. The drum was played once again. "What's the meaning of this?" asked the king in a rage. "How did the drum come to know of our secret?"

Satbir shook with fear. He knew he did not have much time left to live. He decided to make a clean breast of the whole thing. He explained how he had suffered harbouring the secret, and how he had tried to share it first with the river, and then with the dead in the graveyard, and how ultimately he chose the tree.

The king could not control his laughter. However, he realised he could no longer trust his personal attendant. He asked Satbir to learn playing the drum if he wished to remain in his service, and asked the drummer to dump the drum in the river, hoping that along with the drum the secret would be drowned for ever.



Chandamama

Supplement - 43



BIRDS AND ANIMALS OF INDIA

The Musical Koel

Many a poet, playback singer, and vocalist have been given the epithet 'Koel', after the most musical among Indian birds. Spring is the time when one can hear the bird singing to his glory. However, he goes silent when cold sweeps the country. That is the time he thinks of migrating to warmer climes. Indian literature abounds in descriptions of the koel's musical talents.

The male bird is a metallic black, with a yellowish-green beak and red around the eyes. The female is more of a dull brown, with a lot of white lines and spots. Koels are notorious for their reluctance to build nests. The female invariably lays eggs in crows' nests, expecting them to hatch them for her and look after the young ones. Of course, the crows oblige her! The eggs are also similar to crows' eggs—a pale gray with brown spots.

The koel's favourite abode is any huge tree full of leaves. Their food consists of fruits and insects.

A PROMISING POET

In India, it is seldom that book-lovers queue up to get books autographed by their authors - though it is not such an uncommon practice elsewhere. Perhaps authors and writers do not become celebrities overnight in this country. Exceptions are there, and 11-year-old Aditya Damodaran of New Delhi is an exception.

The New Delhi World Book Fair was on early in February, and in one of the stalls occupied by a well-known Indian

Publisher sat Aditya, merrily autographing copies of his just released collection

of poems. Book-lovers had already read raving reviews of "Vibrations" in newspapers and magazines.

No wonder they lined up in long queues, when they heard that the budding poet would be

autographing copies of his book. A good number of them were children whose favourite pastime is to pen poems.

Aditya wrote his first poem when he was eight. Till then he was a voracious reader. The writers who had caught his attention included Wordsworth and Byron. His father was then serving in the north-eastern States, where it becomes dark early in the day; the four-year-old would often stray into his father's study and pick up books at random. He confesses he used to read poems without understanding their meaning.

Past five and a half years, Aditya took courage in seeking their meanings from his parents. It was then that he began appreciating the themes-especially those revolving round Nature.

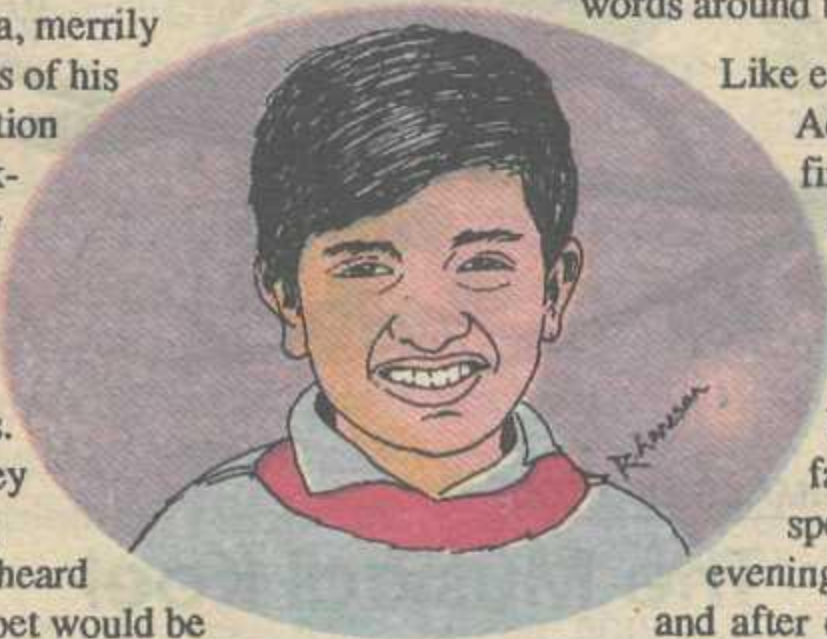
From the scenic beauty of the east, he moved to cities like Calcutta and Delhi, where for the first time he came face to face with poverty and pollution that evoked emotions in him. He decided to weave words around them.

Like every school boy, Aditya takes time to finish his homework after he comes from school and then goes out to play, mostly football. Chess is his favourite game. He spends the rest of the evening reading books, and after dinner, sits before

his personal computer to compose poems.

He is just waiting for his annual exams to be over, so that he can choose the poems to go into his second collection.

Aditya knows that he cannot become a 'professional' poet. When he grows up, he wants to be a computer engineer. For that, he will have to wait another 10 or 15 years. Until then, we can expect a good crop of compositions from this promising poet.



DO YOU KNOW?

1. What is the measurement of weight for gold and precious stones?
2. Which is the brightest star in the sky?
3. Who published the world's first paperback (book)?
4. This year's Oscar Awards have been announced; India's Satyajit Ray has received the Special Award. How did these awards get the name "Oscar"?
5. If silver jubilee is the 25th anniversary, what is Paper Anniversary?
6. Which is the first month in the Saka calendar?
7. Table tennis was known by another name before 1921. Which?
8. A prophet of Persia is believed to have laughed the very day he was born. Who was he?
9. A, B and O are blood groups. There is a fourth one. Which?
10. Someone was the President of three countries at the same time. Who was he? When?
11. What is the unique feature of Zebras?
12. How many moons has Saturn?
13. What colour does the sky appear to an astronaut in space?
14. Who founded Agra? In which year?
15. Does the earthworm possess eyes and ears? In which part of the body?

ANSWERS

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. A Carat. | 15. The earthworm does not have |
| 2. The Great Dog or the Dog Star. | 14. Sikandar Lodi, in 1506. |
| 3. Anton Philipp Reclam, in 1867. | 13. Purple |
| 4. In 1929, when the first awards were announced, the statuette was shaped like a man. An official of the American Academy of Motion Pictures remarked that it looked like his uncle, Oscar. That name was adopted for the statuette, which stands on a reel of film | 12. Ten |
| | 11. No two zebras have similar stripes. |
| | 10. Simon Bolivar. In 1928, he was the President of Bolivia, Peru, and Columbia. |
| | 9. AB |
| | 8. Zoroaster, who founded Zoroastrianism, the ancient religion of Persia. |
| | 7. Ping-pong, invented by a British Firm |



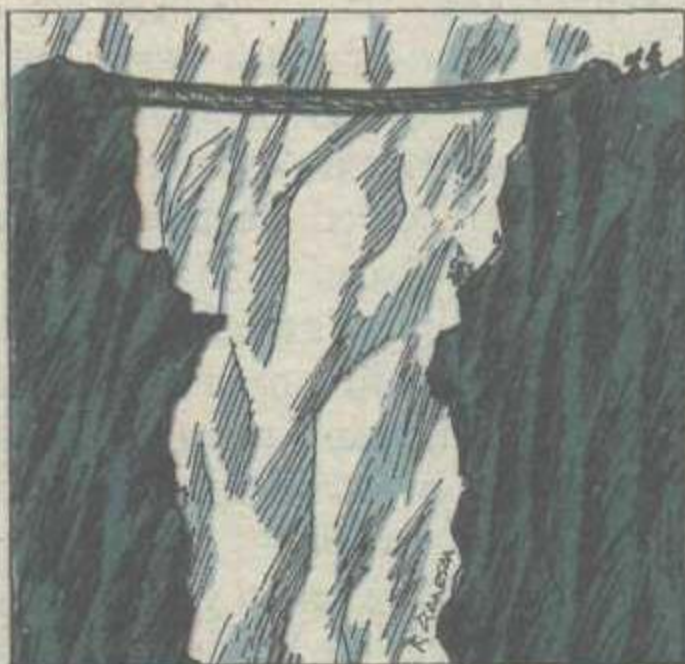
Highest

If anyone were to ask you where the highest motorable bridge in the world is, you can now proudly answer: near Khardung La (18,503 ft. above the sea level) in the Ladakh region of Jammu & Kashmir. It was constructed under the Himank project of Beacons, which is India's Border Roads Organisation. Brig. Vombat Kera, Chief Engineer supervising the project, has been honoured with an entry in the Guinness book of Records.



Yellow for better eyesight

There is hope for children with blurred vision. They will be able to see more clearly if they wear yellow-tinted spectacles. Dr. John Stein of Oxford University's neuro-physiology department conducted experiments with 20 such children wearing normal glasses and found that they reported a better vision with yellow-tinted eyeglasses.



Half million for one tree

Though difficult to pronounce, Ahuehuete is attracting hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. It is a large cypress-like tree and is believed to be more than 2,000 years old. This key tourist attraction is in Oaxaca state of Mexico, and the government there has decided to spend 500,000 dollars to save it.



His Feathered Friend

On top of the Hangi hills, there was a forest of pine trees. The king's officers, merchants, and travellers had to pass through the forest frequently, and they were all captivated by the song of a bird which had taken up residence in one of the tall trees. The notes were so musical that they would remain in their memory for days on end. However much they tried to get a glimpse of the bird, they would fail and go away disappointed. It seldom came out in the open; if they had seen it, they would have certainly exclaimed, "What a strange bird!" For, it was really strange in shape, size and colours.

By and by, word reached the king about the strange bird. 'If only I could get it here in my palace, how happy I would be!' he said to himself. He mentioned this in court once or twice, and soon people realised, now that the king had expressed such a desire, they sure could expect a handsome reward if they could go and capture the bird for the king.

Some of them did go up to the Hangi hills and spend a long time

looking for the bird. But they could not see even the end of its tail. They, too, heard its song and agreed that they were quite musical. A few others, who claimed themselves to be clever, caught some birds which they thought were strange-looking and took them to the king. When he listened to their calls, he knew they were fooling him, and he severely punished them and let the birds free.

In the valley, below the Hangi hills, was a hamlet where a young man lived. He would often walk up to the forest and spend long hours listening to the bird. He would be leaning against a tree when the bird



would first ensure that there was nobody else around and then fly down and perch itself on his shoulder. He found the bird very beautiful. He did not touch it even once and would only raise his head and look at it as if to strike a conversation.

When he heard of the king's wish, the young man was in two minds. If he were to catch the bird and present it to the king, he would become rich with a royal reward. And all his difficulties would be over. But, then, the bird might be put in a cage and would suffer there, and he might lose his friendship with the bird.

One day, the young man did not hear the bird sing, nor could he see it

for a long time. Suddenly it flew down from nowhere and sat on his shoulder, as usual. He was in for a surprise. That day the bird spoke to him!

"I know what you're thinking. Well, let me tell you a story, and if you won't have any pity, I shall go with you, but if you were to feel sad, I shall fly away!" said the strange bird.

"I agree to your condition, O! strange bird!" said the young man.

The bird then narrated this story: "Once there was a hunter who had a dog extremely faithful to him. One day, while they were returning from the forest, they met a trader. He had stopped on the way as one of the



wheels of his cart had given way. The cart was carrying bags of silver. The trader requested the hunter to guard the cart so that he could run up to the nearest village and get someone to repair the wheel. The hunter obliged him and stood guard near the cart. However, the trader appeared to be taking a long time to come back from the village, and the hunter became impatient. So, he asked his dog to take care of the cart and went away. When the trader came back, he saw the dog standing guard and he was mightily pleased with it. He placed a small silver bar in the dog's mouth and sent it away. It went back to its master, the silver held tight in its mouth.

"When the hunter saw his dog with the silver, there arose a doubt in his mind. Did his dog steal the silver and run away forsaking his duty? He got angry with the dog and killed it with his axe."

"How sad!" remarked the young man on hearing the story. "The poor dog! He was so faithful and innocent!"

"I see that you feel sorry for the dog. You've a kind heart. I can go now." The bird then flew away.

The young man started walking back home, but before he had come out of the forest, the bird flew down again. "I shall narrate another incident—on the same condition."

The young man once again agreed.



The bird began the story: "One year, the rains failed, and a farmer went out in search of a place where he could get enough water. He roamed and roamed, and at last entered a forest. He heard the gurgling sound of a stream. He was thirsty but felt too tired to look for the river. He sat down in the shadow of a rock to rest.

"Suddenly he saw drops of water falling from the rock overhead. Might be some water had trickled from the stream, he thought, and collected the drops in a leaf. As he was about to drink it, a little bird swooped on to the leaf and toppled it along with the water in it.

"The farmer was angry with the bird. He threw a stone at it and killed it in one hit. He then went in search of the stream and drank to his fill. As he walked back towards the rock, he found a huge serpent lying there and then it dawned on him that what he

had taken to be drops of water were really poison from its fangs."


"How sad!" remarked the young man. "The farmer killed the bird that had saved his life."

The strange bird, perched on his shoulder, then said, "We birds and beasts are often misunderstood by the human beings. They treat us so cruelly under some pretext or another. Do you still wish that I become a prisoner of your king? Won't you and others prefer to hear my songs?"

The young man knew he was foolish in dreaming of riches that he could get from the king in return for the bird. "Yes, what you say is true! Pray, continue to live in the forest and treat us with your songs. I value your friendship more than any reward from the king!"

The strange bird flew away into the trees, while the young man wended his way back to his hamlet.





New Tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

A Question of Status

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O king, you are making untiring efforts and without respite as if you wish to achieve something. You also seem to have made a promise to somebody and want to carry out that promise. I'm now reminded of a king who made a similar promise. Let me narrate that story to you." The vampire then told the following story to the king.

Mansingh was the King of Mukta-pur. His benign rule made his sub-



jects happy, while he himself was bothered by something that happened in one part of the capital. There was a forest where roamed a ferocious animal. It terrorised the people in the nearby village, taking them unawares and attacking them, and killing all those who resisted it. Some days, it even dared to enter the capital, scaring the people who then ran helter-skelter. The king himself tried to hunt it out, but the animal evaded him. So much so the people felt very insecure.

How much can a king tolerate if he is not able to assure his subjects of safety and security? King Man-

singh, who had taken so much pains to keep his people happy, now began to apprehend that the people might soon lose faith in him, speak ill of him, and even rise against him. Be that as it may, how could he remain so passive when his subjects became an easy prey to the animal?

Mansingh called all his ministers for a meeting. Queen Anasuya, who was present at that time, agreed to his proposal to give their daughter's hand in marriage to anyone who could kill the animal. The ministers suggested that he could also be given half of the kingdom. The king asked the ministers to make the announcement in all parts of the kingdom.

Several young men went into the forest to kill the ferocious animal. But none succeeded and none came back alive. By now, no one dared to accept the challenge and go to the forest to track the beast. Veerbhadra was an exception. He was the son of the tribal chieftain. He told his people he would make an attempt, and started on his adventure.

For fifteen days he searched for the animal. He then found it hiding behind a thick bush. He climbed a nearby tree and waited for the beast to come out. When it saw Veerbhadra on the tree, it came out and stood



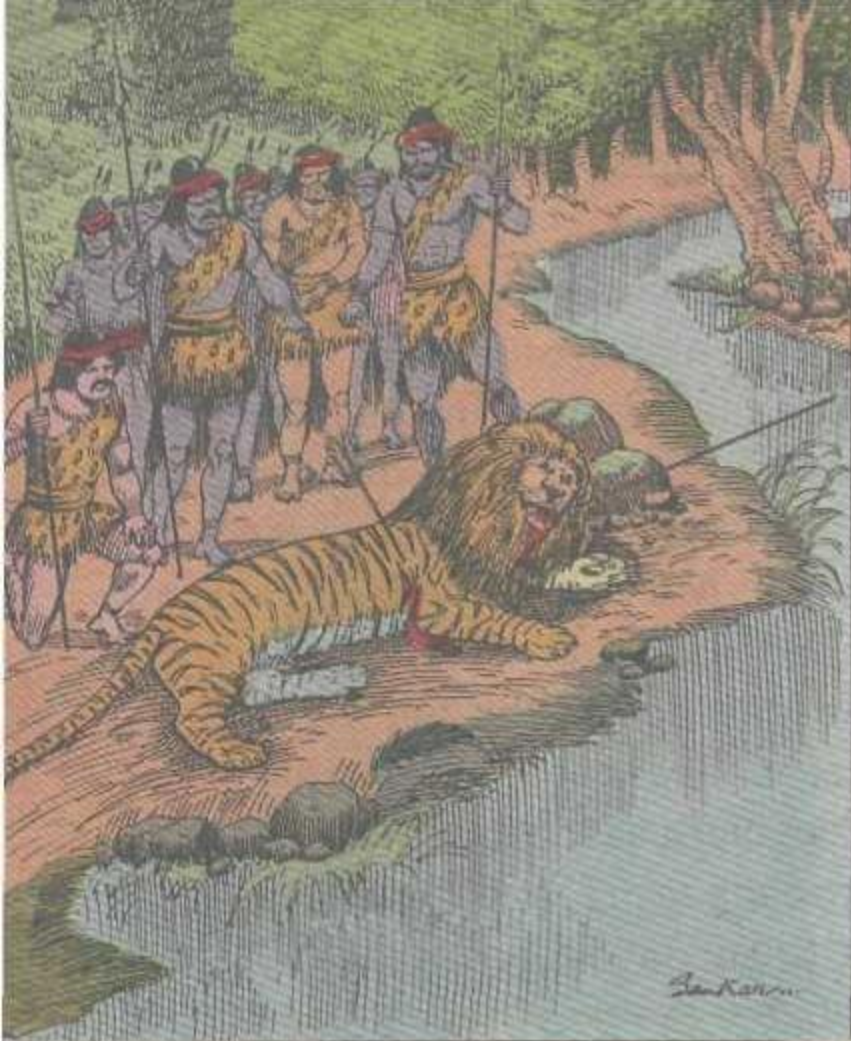
beneath the tree, and roared, fearfully. But the tribal youth did not lose his courage. He shot an arrow that went and lodged itself in the chest of the animal.

The beast was furious. It jumped towards where Veerbhadra was standing on the tree. In a trice, he sent his spear aiming it at the animal's neck. It fell on the ground, dead. Veerbhadra rested on the tree till it was dawn. He then went home and told his family and friends how he had been able to kill the beast that had terrorised the people for a long time. The tribals praised the youth and congratulated their chieftain on the prospect of his son marrying

Princess Prabhavati and also earning half of the kingdom. They were all very happy.

King Mansingh, too, heard of the tribal youth's valour. He was glad, something that had bothered him for several days had been solved at last. However, he was sad on another count. After all, Veerbhadra was a tribal youth, and not from a wealthy, aristocratic family, not even educated. How could he give his dear daughter's hand in marriage to such a young man? How could he accept a tribal for his son-in-law? Mansingh was really hoping that some prince from a neighbouring kingdom would kill the animal and claim





the princess's hand. That hope was shattered. The claimant now was a tribal. But how could he refuse to fulfil his promise? Mansingh spent sleepless nights. He forgot that he was the king of the land and his people looked at him as their ideal and worshipped him. Right now, he was a mere father sorrowing for the sake of his dear daughter.

Mansingh called his ministers and conferred with them in the presence of the queen and the princess. The ministers were of the view that it would be below the dignity of the king to marry off the princess to a tribal youth. However, Princess

Prabhavati came forth with a solution. "Father, you may call the tribal youth and offer him half of the kingdom. Perhaps he'll be satisfied with that."

The ministers complimented the princess on her wisdom. "That should really satisfy him, Your Majesty. Moreover, we should make the youth himself say that he doesn't deserve the hand of the princess. Otherwise, we may be accused of not keeping our promise. Let's call the youth here and speak to him."

Mansingh sent word to Veerbhadra. When he came, he was accommodated in a comfortable place and was later invited to the palace. The king then reminded him of his parentage, upbringing, and status in society. He offered him half of the kingdom, while carefully avoiding any mention of the princess.

Veerbhadra knew what the king was driving at. He was not at all upset. Calmly he said, "Your Majesty, I can very well understand your predicament. You don't even have to give me half of your kingdom. I did not kill that animal for the sake of any reward. The beast was terrorising the people. They were afraid of coming out of their homes. My aim

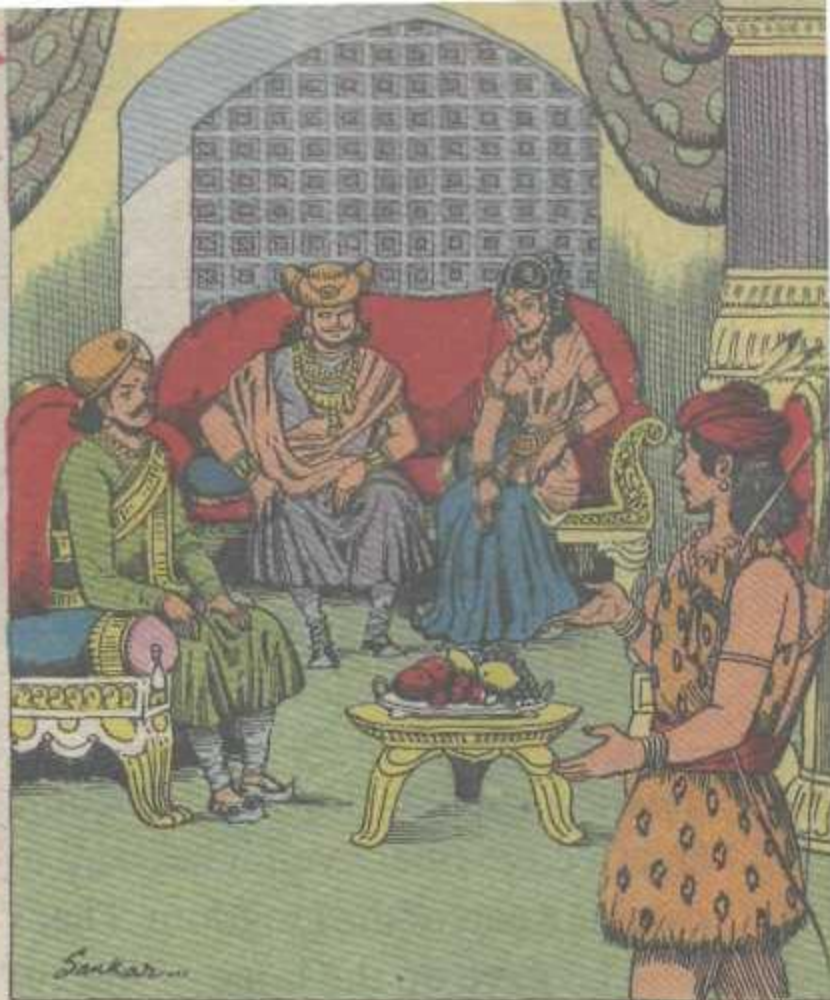


was to remove that fear from them. I was only doing my duty as a citizen. I was not dreaming of marrying the princess or becoming a prince. I don't want your kingdom nor the hand of your daughter. And I'm willing to announce this in public."

King Mansingh and the ministers, who were listening to the tribal youth in rapt attention, were happy that their problem had solved by itself so easily. But some surprise was in store for them, when Princess Prabhavati declared, "Father, even if you don't give him half of the kingdom, I won't be bothered. But I've now decided to take him as my husband!"

The king and the ministers, as well as Queen Anasuya, could not believe their ears. They sat still, shocked.

The vampire concluded the story there and asked King Vikramaditya, "O! king! Didn't Veerbhadra really kill the animal in the hope of getting the kingdom and marrying the princess? Didn't he nourish that hope when he went to the palace at the invitation of the king? Once he realised that the king was not willing to marry off the princess to him, why did he tell a lie that he had no desire for the princess or the kingdom when



he went and killed the beast? The princess at first remarked that the tribal youth had no education, no status, but later insisted on marrying him. Why? If you know the answers, and still refuse to satisfy me, be forewarned, your head will blow into pieces!"

Vikramaditya as usual was ready with the answers. "Veerbhadra was certain that Mansingh would not keep his word. And that was not at all behoving of a king. He had also hoped the tribal youth would declare that he did not wish to marry the princess. Veerbhadra thus understood the king's dilemma. He also



doubted whether he could become an effective ruler even if he were to receive a part of the kingdom. That's why he gave up the hope of marrying the princess. On the contrary, the princess noticed how he was ready to forsake his claim for both the princess and the kingdom. She was struck by his character. That changed her mind and prompted her

to tell the king that she would marry only Veerbhadra. Her decision was very correct."

The vampire knew that he had been outsmarted by King Vikramaditya. He gave him the slip and flew back to the ancient tree, taking the corpse along with him. The king drew his sword and went after the vampire.

WE HAVE!

Customer : What are the things you have?

Shop-keeper : We have something for every kind of need, sir.

Customer : Have you got anything for aching teeth?

Shop-keeper : This ointment, sir.

Customer : Anything for gray hair?

Shop-keeper : The greatest respect, sir.





VEER HANUMAN

20

6 set

(Rama assures Vibhishana of protection, despite the misgivings expressed by Sugriva and Lakshman. Vibhishana agrees to fight on the side of Rama and the Vanaras. Ravana sends Suka as his emissary to Sugriva. He assumes the form of a huge bird. The Vanara soldiers torment him before he is freed by Rama. The Lord of the Seas appears before Rama and suggests construction of a dam to cross over to Lanka. The job is given to Nala.)

When Hanuman pleaded that Vibhishana be accepted and given protection as he had professed his respect and reverence for Sree Rama, he remarked, "It'll be against righteousness if we refuse protection to anyone seeking refuge from us. Vibhishana has come to us as he is certain that I won't forsake him."

"He may be a gentleman," said

Sugriva, "but I shall have nothing to do with him! He left his brother, Ravana, at a time when he landed himself in trouble. How can we be so sure he won't discard us if we get into any difficulties? I personally feel that we should not take him into our fold."

"Vibhishana has come away because he did not approve of his

Vibhishana in Rival Camp

brother's actions," said Rama. "He did not wish to jeopardise himself by colluding with his brother."

"It's possible that he has been sent here to kill us," Lakshmana revealed his apprehension. "I'm also not agreeable to allowing him to join us."

Rama was, however, convinced of Vibhishana's innocence and sincerity. "It's our duty to welcome whoever has sought our protection. Even if Ravana were to come here in disguise, seeking our protection, we should be ready to accept him." He then turned to Sugriva. "You may go and receive Vibhishana with due courtesy and bring him here."

Sugriva went out, welcomed

Vibhishana and his four demon companions and took them to where Rama was seated. All five of them fell at the feet of Rama and paid their obeisance to him. "I'm Ravana's brother, Vibhishana. He insulted me and that's why I left him and Lanka and came here, as I know I'll be safe here. I've heard a lot about your righteousness and justice."

Rama consoled Vibhishana and assured him of all protection. "Do tell us, how strong is Ravana's army? What's his personal strength?"

"As you know, he has been given a boon by Lord Brahma himself," said Vibhishana, "that he will not be killed by any deva, or asura, or



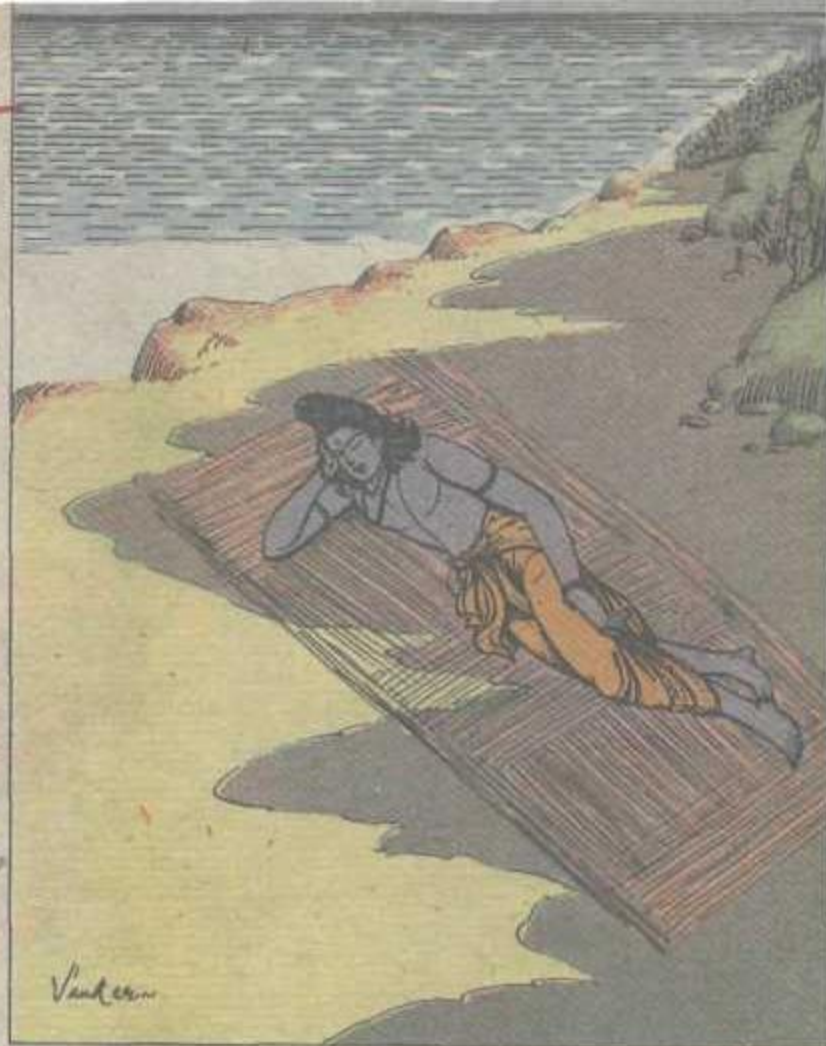
gandharva, or even by a snake. Besides, his brother, Kumbhakarna, who is older to me, is a mighty warrior. Ravana's son, Indrajit, is an expert in magic which he uses while fighting. He once defeated Devendra, the leader of all devas. Ravana's commanders are equally strong and invincible. Some of the demons in Lanka are capable of disguise and can take the form and size of whatever they like. Ravana has been overlording all seven worlds with all this might at his command."

"Whatever be his strength," Rama assured Vibhishana, "I shall defeat him, and I shall make you the ruler of Lanka. From now on, you'll be on our side. I shall not return to Ayodhya before I annihilate Ravana and his tribe."

Vibhishana thanked Rama profusely, and said, "I shall also fight Ravana on your side. I'm ready to help you as much as I can."

Rama then asked Lakshmana to go and get some water from the sea. "Let us anoint Vibhishana here and now and declare that he is the rightful ruler of Lanka."

Lakshmana soon went and collected water from the sea and handed the pot to Rama. Amidst the joyous shouts of the Vanaras, Vibhishana

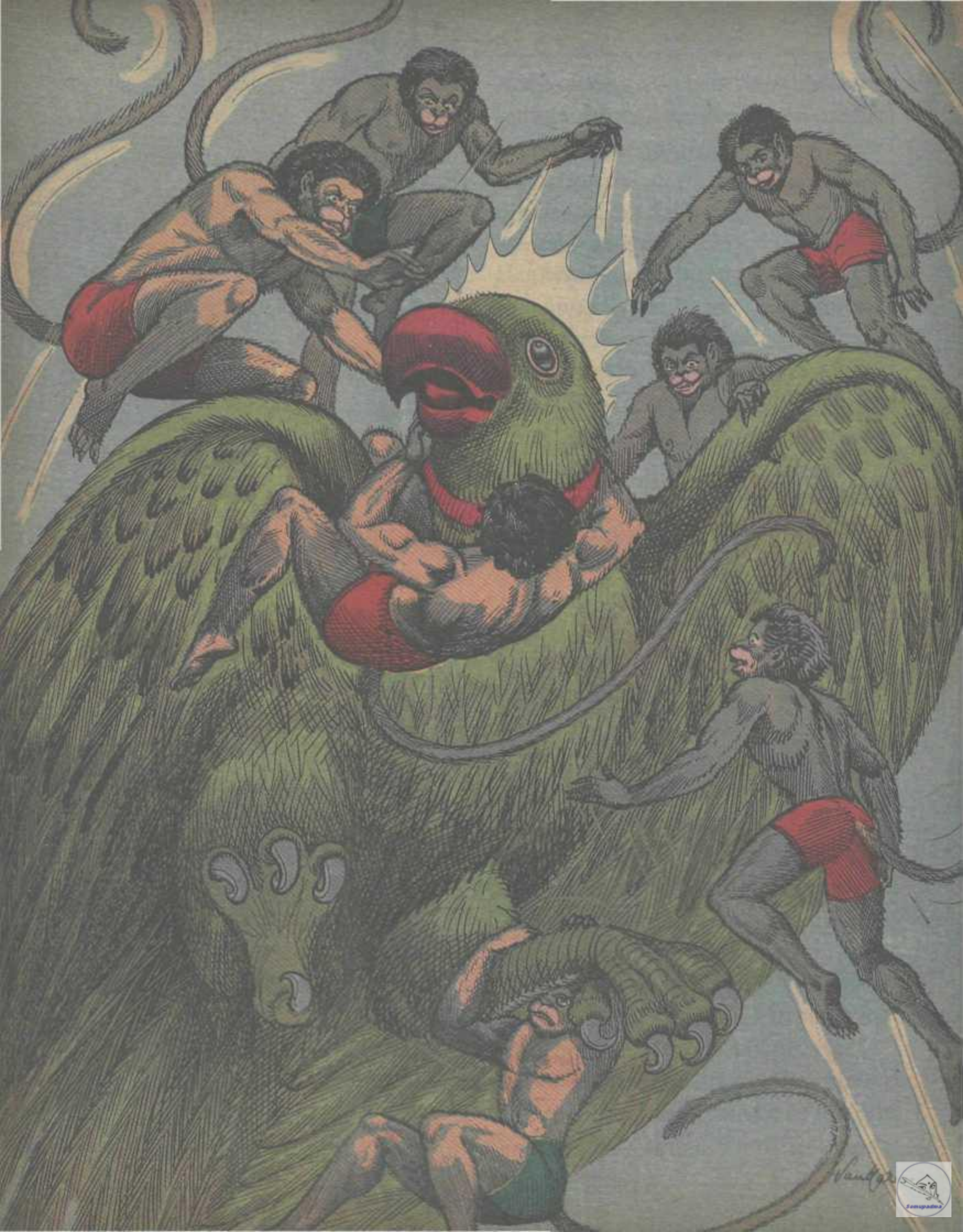


was anointed by Rama. Soon afterwards, Sugriva and Hanuman joined them to discuss their next strategy.

"How can the Vanara army cross the sea to reach Lanka?" asked Sugriva of Vibhishana.

"If Sree Rama requests to the Lord of the Seas", explained Vibhishana, "there can be a way out, because one of Rama's ancestors called Sagara had rendered a lot of help to the Lord, and I feel he won't forsake us."

Sugriva passed on that information to Rama. "That's good," agreed Rama. "I shall certainly do as he suggests," he said enthusiastically.



Rama then spread a mat on the seashore itself and lay down for a while.

Meanwhile, one of Ravana's spies called Sardoola returned to Lanka with details about the Vanara camp. "The monkey army is like an ocean. Both Rama and Lakshmana have very powerful arrows and other arms. They'll go to any extent to recover Sita. They all have reached the seashore. We may send someone to gather more information."

Ravana then sent for the demon, Suka. "You must go and meet Sugriva as my emissary. You must ask him why he should bother about my kidnapping Sita. Is he brave enough to face me? You ask him to go back to Kishkindhya, and not risk his life by joining forces with Rama. No one can enter Lanka, not even devas, nor the gandharvas. Then, how can the monkey army expect to enter my city? Let them not misjudge my strength. None of them need dream of rescuing Sita. You may go and convey this message to Sugriva."

Suka then assumed the form of a huge bird and reached the seashore where the Vanara army was camping. He started speaking in a loud voice so that everybody could hear him. Some of the Vanaras went and



forced the bird to land. Suka shouted, "O! Rama! I've come here as an emissary to Sugriva. Your soldiers are torturing me! Please stop them!"

Rama then checked the Vanaras and turned to Sugriva. "What reply shall we send to Ravana?"

Sugriva called Suka to his side. "You go and tell Ravana that he is not my friend. He has not done any good to me. Whereas, I'm obliged to Rama. I can't forget all the help extended to me by Rama. Ravana is my friend's enemy, and as such he is my enemy as well. Let Ravana remember how Bali met his end at the hands of Rama. We shall soon be





entering Lanka and that will be the end of Ravana and his army. Lanka will be wiped out of all demons. Nobody can resist the might of Rama. In fact, Ravana was a coward to choose a time to kidnap Sita when Rama and Lakshmana were away from her. He must be afraid of meeting his enemy face to face. His end will be at the hands of Rama. There's no doubt about it. You may go and tell all this to Ravana."

Suka was about to fly away. Angada stopped him. "I don't think he is any emissary at all. He must be one of Ravana's spies." Sugriva ordered that the bird be tied. Some Vanaras

were just waiting for such a command. They approached Suka. Before they tied him, they poked him in his eyes. Rama took pity on him and ordered that he be released.

Rama then wove a mat out of sacred reeds, sat on it and propitiated the Lord of the Seas. The worship continued for three days, still the Lord did not make his appearance. Rama was angry and he called Lakshmana. "Look at the audacity of the Lord of the Seas. Bring me my bow and arrow. I shall see that all the seas dry up."

Lakshmana brought Rama's bow and arrow. He sent an arrow deep into the sea. High waves rose from the sea and covered the horizon like a smoke. Rama did not stop with that. "O! Lord of the Seas! My next arrow will dry up all the water. The sea will turn into a desert. I've been awaiting your appearance all these days. You dare to disappoint me? Have you been influenced by the demons living by your side?"

Rama waited for a while more. As he was about to send another arrow, there was a deafening sound. The mountains shook. The earth stood still. There was darkness all over. The wind blew at a high speed. All living beings gave out heart-rending

cries. That moment the Lord of the Seas slowly rose from the sea. He was accompanied by the guarding angels of Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Narmada, Sindhu, Kaveri, and other rivers. They all lined up in front of Rama.

The Lord of the Seas bowed low. "O! Rama! I'm not capable of resisting your might. I shall do whatever you ask me to. You've only to command, and it'll be done. Would you like to take your army across to Lanka? It'll be done this very moment. Shall I make arrangements?"

"You've come to me rather late," said Rama in rebuke. "I've already given the *mantra* to this arrow. I'll have to send it, any way. I can't take it back. Tell me where I shall send it. It must serve some purpose."

"You may aim it towards the north," said the Lord of the Seas. "There's a group called Ambiras. They engage themselves in all sorts of despicable activities. Let the arrow annihilate them and bring peace

and prosperity to the earth."

Rama sent the arrow towards the north, as suggested by the Lord of the Seas. It fell where the Ambiras were residing and everyone of them was killed. The Lord of the Seas then told Rama, "Among the Vanara soldiers, there's Nala. He's the son of Viswakarma who built the palace of the devas. Nala can build a dam across the sea. You can use it as a bridge to cross over to Lanka, and I shall see to it that it does not submerge in the sea. Let's start work immediately. You may send for Nala without delay."

Rama sent word to Nala. When he came, Rama told him all that the Lord of the Seas had suggested. "Yes, I'm the son of Viswakarma the builder of Devaloka. I've received his blessings, and I am equally capable. I shall start work on the dam immediately. The Vanaras can help me. We must attack Ravana at the earliest."

-To continue

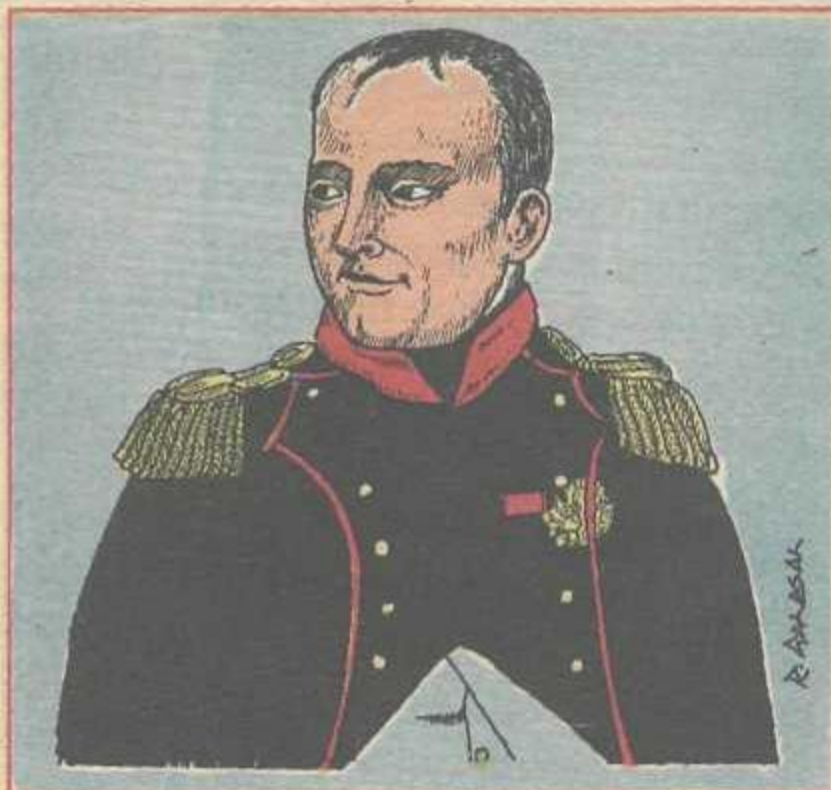


Can you imagine that Napoleon, who once ruled over the vast French empire (1804-15) refused to learn the French language? He was born in Corsica, which was at one time at war with France. So, for Napoleon, French was the language of the enemy! In the Nobles School of Brienne, he kept himself aloof from the French boys who used to taunt him. "If the Corsicans were so brave, why were they defeated by the French?" they would ask him. "They were few in number," young Napoleon

would answer them boldly. "Let me grow older, and I'll see how the French can defeat us." He was determined to become a soldier. He would go to the nearby barracks and exchange the soft bread he was given in the hostel for the hard, thick, dry bread which was part of the soldiers' ration. He would eat only one meal a day. While his schoolmates slept, he used to get up early at 3 a.m. to study, especially the history and geography of the world to understand world politics. Later, he were to rewrite the history of France when he led the country from one victory to another.

LEAVES FROM THE LIVES OF THE
GREAT

Hard bread to get tough





Reformation

Thirumala was a wealthy person of Tirupur. He owned many weaving mills, engaging several employees. In his house, too, he kept quite a few servants. However, he did not bother about them and was blind to their hardships. His wife Lakshmi and son Mani did not like his attitude and tried their best to change his mind, but they did not succeed and came to the conclusion that nothing would change his character.

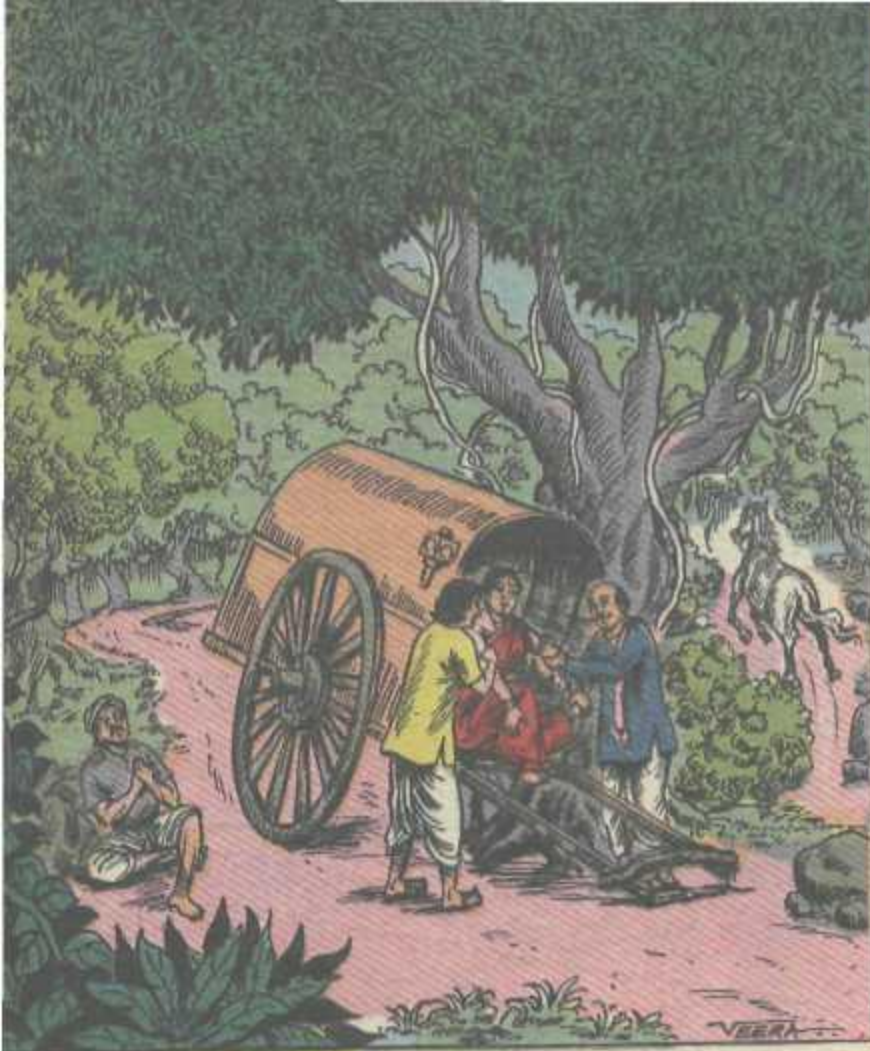
He had a handsome horse and an elegant carriage. He would ride on it every day when he went to visit his mills. He saw to it that the horse was fed properly and the carriage was kept spick and span. But he treated the driver like any of his other employees. Kuppuswami had been in his

service for long years, yet Thirumala would not have a kind word for his driver, nor would he enquire after his welfare.

The road to one of his mills was very bad, with many potholes. In fact, no one used that road after sunset, as bandits made it a practice to waylay harried travellers and rob them of their belongings. One day, Thirumala decided to visit that mill which was some distance from his residence. As he planned to stay there for a day or two, he took his wife and son along with him.

They started early morning and did not stop anywhere on the way. Lakshmi had taken some eatables and all three of them had their fill in the carriage itself. By afternoon, old Kuppuswami was





hungry and tired, and dozed off for a while, when the horse went out of control and the carriage rode over a big pothole and hit against a tree.

The three passengers had a severe jolt. They got down from the carriage which had also their luggage. "What shall we do?" Mani asked his father.

"There's no other go," said Thirumala, "except to carry these things ourselves. We cannot stay here as it is not a safe place. We must somehow reach the nearest village. Come on, hurry up!" They collected what-

ever they could carry and started walking.

Before they had not gone far, Lakshmi remembered the driver. "Oh! We completely forgot Kuppuswami. Poor man! He had fallen from the cart and was lying on the wayside."

"What a time to think about the driver!" Thirumala snubbed his wife. "Let's try to reach a village, instead of worrying about him. We'll send someone from the village to look him up."

The long walk in the hot sun tired all three of them soon. Thirumala sat down first. Suddenly he felt thirsty. "Did anyone remember to take the water jug?" he asked, not specifically directing his query either to his wife or to his son. Lakshmi looked at Mani, and the youngster looked at his mother. Neither of them had remembered to take the jug.

"It must be still in the cart," said both of them together. "We didn't expect all this trouble. During our smooth ride, we forgot everything else," they excused themselves.

It was then that Thirumala remembered—how he used to make his servants and employees



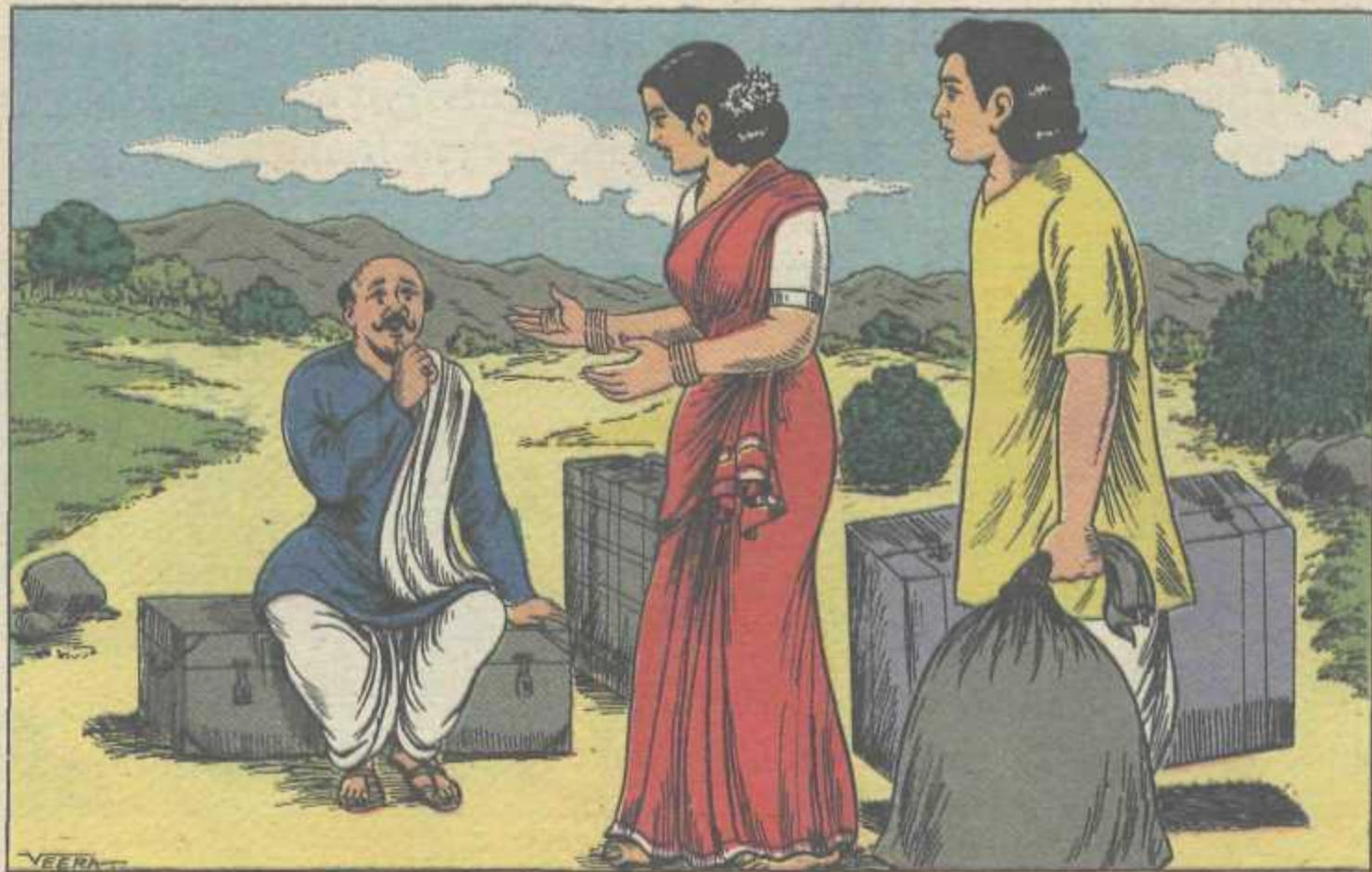
work in the hot sun. How much had he himself craved for a drop of water to quench his thirst? What then to speak of the poor driver, Kuppuswami, who had gone without a drop of water or a morsel of food since early morning when they started out? He realised that he had been very mean to the old man. Thirumala was struck with remorse, and he got up to go and look up Kuppuswami.

His son stopped him. "Father, please don't exert yourself. I shall myself go and fetch the water jug," said Mani.

"I'm not going for the water jug, my son," said Thirumala. "I

want to look up Kuppuswami. You said he had fallen from the cart. Better come with me. We shall take him to a doctor. Till now, I haven't behaved humanely with anyone. Today's incident is an eye-opener to me. When everybody worked for my happiness and welfare, I was oblivious of their needs. I feel so sorry."

Mani was surprised to see the sudden change in his father's attitude. When they had walked some distance, they found Kuppuswami and the horse-cart coming towards them. On seeing them, Kuppuswami stopped the cart and got down.



"How do you feel now, Kuppuswami?" asked Thirumala. "You shouldn't have driven when you were unwell. Anyway, eat something before you drive again."

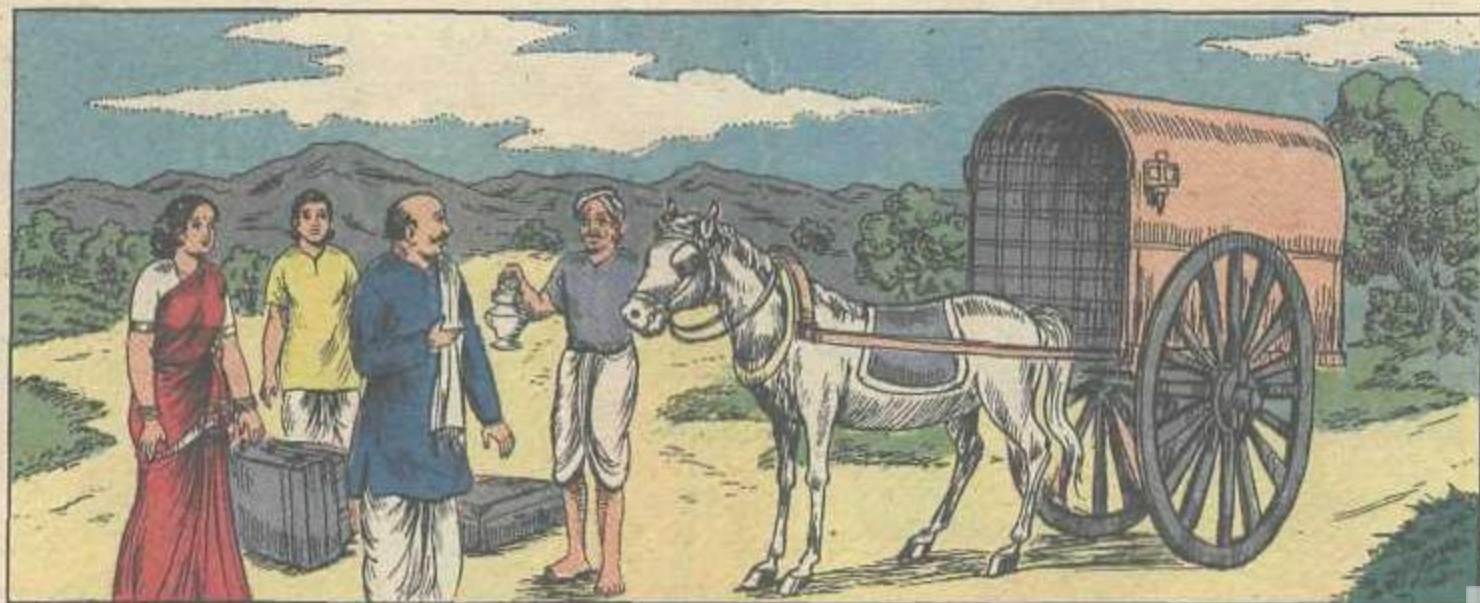
"I'm all right now, my master," said Kuppuswami. "I must have dozed off as I was tired after driving at one stretch and without eating anything. I'm used to such happenings. Maybe you were seeing me in such a state for the first time. I'm sorry you were put to trouble because of me. You all must be very tired by now!"

Thirumala now felt really bad about the whole incident. He was sorry he had been unkind to such a good-natured man. He patted Kuppuswami and said, "Don't worry. First let's have something

to drink. I feel thirsty." Kuppuswami brought the water jug and helped his master with a glass of water.

"Kuppuswami, please bear with me!" said Thirumala apologetically. "I've troubled you very much. In fact, till now, I haven't bothered to take care of all those who are working for me. Today I realise my failings."

Thirumala, Lakshmi, and Mani then got into the cart, and Kuppuswami drove them to the nearby village where they all enjoyed a sumptuous meal. After their visit to the mill and return to their place, Thirumala began to treat his employees with kindness and concern. "You won't find a better master than ours," they would praise him to their friends.



THEIR WISH

Old Jagannath had the responsibility of taking care of his two grandsons, when his son and daughter-in-law died suddenly in an epidemic. He wondered how he could bring them up as decent young men.

One day, he happened to share his worry with friend Mahendranath. He told Jagannath, "Let me talk to them." He called them by his side and said, "I shall put a question to both of you. You must think well before you answer me. And whoever gives me the correct answer, will earn ten rupees."

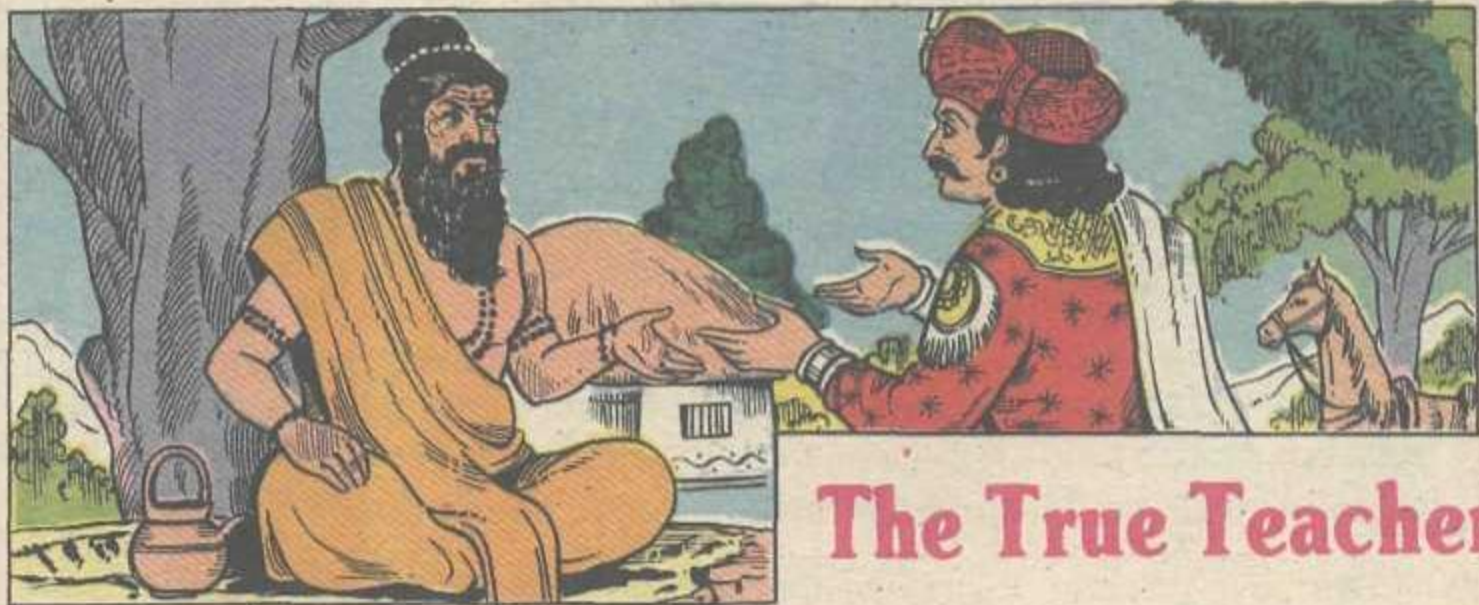
The boys nodded. "Suppose the god were to appear before you," said Mahendranath, "and asks you what you'll wish for to lead a happy life, what'll you choose?"

The elder one said, "If I get a fertile piece of land, I shall lead a contented life."

The second one said, "I don't want any land on which I'll have to toil. Instead, if I can get a magic ring, I shall put it to good use."

Mahendranath turned to his friend. "Jagannath, when the time comes, you may give the elder one your house and the land around it. He'll stay here and prosper. And you don't bother about the younger one. He'll thrive wherever he goes." He then gave the boy ten rupees and said, "Come with me; I shall find some work for you."





The True Teacher

King Veerendra had two sons—Vijay and Ajay. Vijay was quick in comprehension, while Ajay was slow in grasping things. He had heard of the ashram run by Ved Prakash. The king called on him and conveyed his desire.

Ved Prakash excused himself, saying he was getting too old to take any more students under his care. However, he mentioned the names of two of his disciples who were running gurukuls; the king could send his sons to any of them.

The king then went to Vivekanand and told him how he had been recommended by his guru Ved Prakash. Vivekanand agreed to take the boys but on one condition. "I'll give them a test first; whoever comes out

successful may become my disciple. You may send your sons for the test."

King Veerendra did not like the way Vivekanand insisted on a prior test. So, he went to Vanidas who, he found, was quite different from Vivekanand. "My approach is different from that of my old classmate," said Vanidas. "A good teacher should be capable of moulding anybody into an intelligent person. That way alone can a teacher be able to show his capacity. You may send your sons; I shall take them without any test."

On his return to the palace, the king called his minister and told him of all that had happened. "That Vivekanand has a lot of ego. We must teach him a lesson."

The minister agreed with the king. "Let's hold a contest for the teachers in the kingdom. I'm certain Vivekanand and Vanidas would participate, and I've no doubt that Vanidas would trounce Vivekanand. His pride will be pricked like a bubble."

The king ordered announcements to be made and the contest was held. Just as the minister had guessed, both Vivekanand and Vanidas attended; however, contrary to all expectations and hopes, it was Vivekanand who came out successful in the contest.

King Veerendra asked him,

"Should a learned man like you be so egoistic?"

"Your majesty," Vivekanand replied courteously, "learned people should not be vain at all. I know it very well. But I was only posing like that when you came to me. Your own pride was pricked. That's why you decided to hold this contest so as to humble me. I had almost expected an invitation from you to join the contest, which has now proved that I'm more intelligent and knowledgeable than all others. As I was confident, I insisted on your sons taking a test before they were admitted."





Veerendra was quite satisfied and happy with Vivekanand's explanation. "I'm convinced that you're not vain about your erudition. Well, would you now accept my sons without a test?"

"If your majesty feels that your sons don't require a test, you may send them to Vanidas," said Vivekanand politely but sternly.

The king was furious. However, Vivekanand said, smilingly, "There's no connection between a guru's scholarship and his wisdom. Even after completing my education in the gurukul, I wasn't quite satisfied, so I

pursued my studies in different subjects. My wish is, my students too, like me, should have a thirst for knowledge and more knowledge. That's why I'm selective about my students. They would always question me to get answers to their doubts. And I would also sharpen my knowledge to be able to answer them. In a way my students themselves are my teachers."

Veerendra now realised how intelligent students can help their teachers to become more knowledgeable. He sent Vijay to Vivekanand and Ajay to Vanidas.

One person can thread a needle better than two.

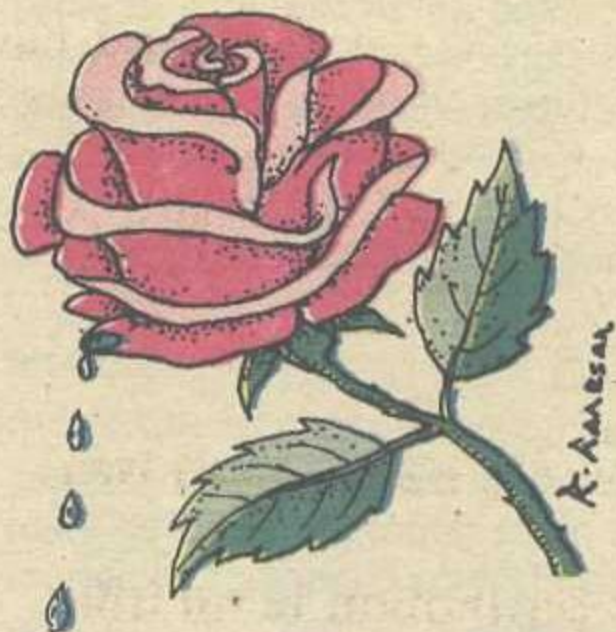
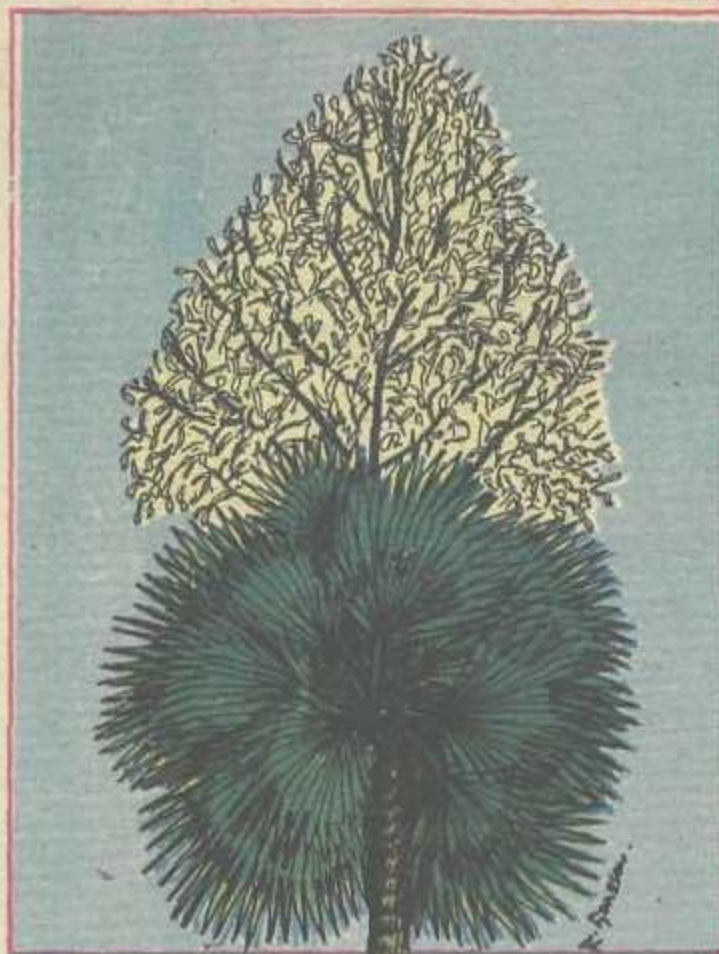
Trifles make perfection, but perfection is no trifle.



WORLD OF NATURE

Once in 100 years

The Century Palm in Bangalore's famed Lalbagh Gardens has bloomed for the first time. This particular variety, botanically known as *Corypha Umbraculifera*, as its more popular name suggests, has a lifespan of 100 years and is believed to flower only once before it withers away. The palm in Bangalore was planted during the early years of the century. A Century Palm in Charamudi Ghats in South Kanara, Karnataka, had flowered in the early '80s. By a strange coincidence, the talipot palm in the Botanical Gardens in Pamplemousses in Mauritius, is in full bloom this year. This palm is said to flower once in 60 years.



Oil from Rose

Exotic roses deserve exotic names. For instance, "Noorjehan", which is one of the hundred very peculiar Indian varieties. Recently, the Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants discovered that this particular variety yields a hundred per cent more oil than a Bulgarian variety hitherto considered the best. Perfume made from this oil is likely to be called Noorjehan.



LET US KNOW

What causes people to faint?

—M. Pratibha Bhat, Mangalore

When there is a sudden, temporary loss of consciousness, we call it *fainting*. The cause may be an emotional shock (e.g., the death of a dear one), or a physical factor (e.g., standing still for one long stretch). In both cases, what exactly happens is, there is reduced blood supply to the brain, or pooling of blood in another part of the body. When a person faints he or she may recover in a short while. Any longer deep unconsciousness, resulting from, say, a head injury, is known as 'coma'.

What is the full form of NEWS?

—Swati Kamat, Vascodagama, Goa

'News' is generally considered and accepted as an acronym (a word formed from the initial letters and/or syllables of other words) of north, east, west and south, and stands for a record of happenings or events taking place all around.

Is it correct to address the people of Czechoslovakia as Czechoslovaks or Czechs?

—K. Darshan, Pune

Nearly 60 per cent of the population of Czechoslovakia are Czechs and 30 per cent Slovaks. The remaining 10 per cent comprise Hungarians, Germans, Polish, and Russians. It will be more appropriate to call them Czechs, generally, unless one desires to specify them by their ethnic origin and call some of them as *Slovaks*. The adjectival form 'Czech' is also commonly used to denote a physical or political feature.

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Pramod Bhanushali



I. Umarani

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs.100/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for March '92 goes to:—

MISS. ANUSHA NATARAJAN,
C/O Mr. V. NATARAJAN,
FLAT-4D, 14A, GOPAL BANERJEE LANE,
KALIGHAT P.O., CALCUTTA-700 026.

The Winning Entry : DIZZY HEIGHTS — MISTY SIGHT.

PICKS FROM THE WISE

Civilization is a race between education and catastrophe.

— H.G.Wells

Real equality is not to be decreed by law. It cannot be given and it cannot be forced.

— Raymond Moley

A man who dares to waste one hour of time has not discovered the value of life.

— Charles Darwin





YOU KNOW HOW THESE
GROWN-UPS KEEP
TELLING US
"DON'T DO THIS"
AND "DON'T DO THAT"?

SO HERE'S SOMETHING
GROWN-UPS ARE NOT
ALLOWED TO DO
(HA! HA! HA!)



THEY'RE NOT ALLOWED
TO EAT THIS YUMMY
NEW JAM FROM
VOLFARM



BECAUSE (MMM!)
IT'S FAR TOO GOOD
FOR THEM



STRICTLY FOR
KIDS ONLY!



New Volfarm Jam is made just for kids.
So, naturally, it's made just the way kids like it.
With the yummiest, juiciest fruits. (Slurp, slurp!)
Tell all those adults to keep their hands off it!

NOW

Volfarm



MIXED FRUIT



PINEAPPLE

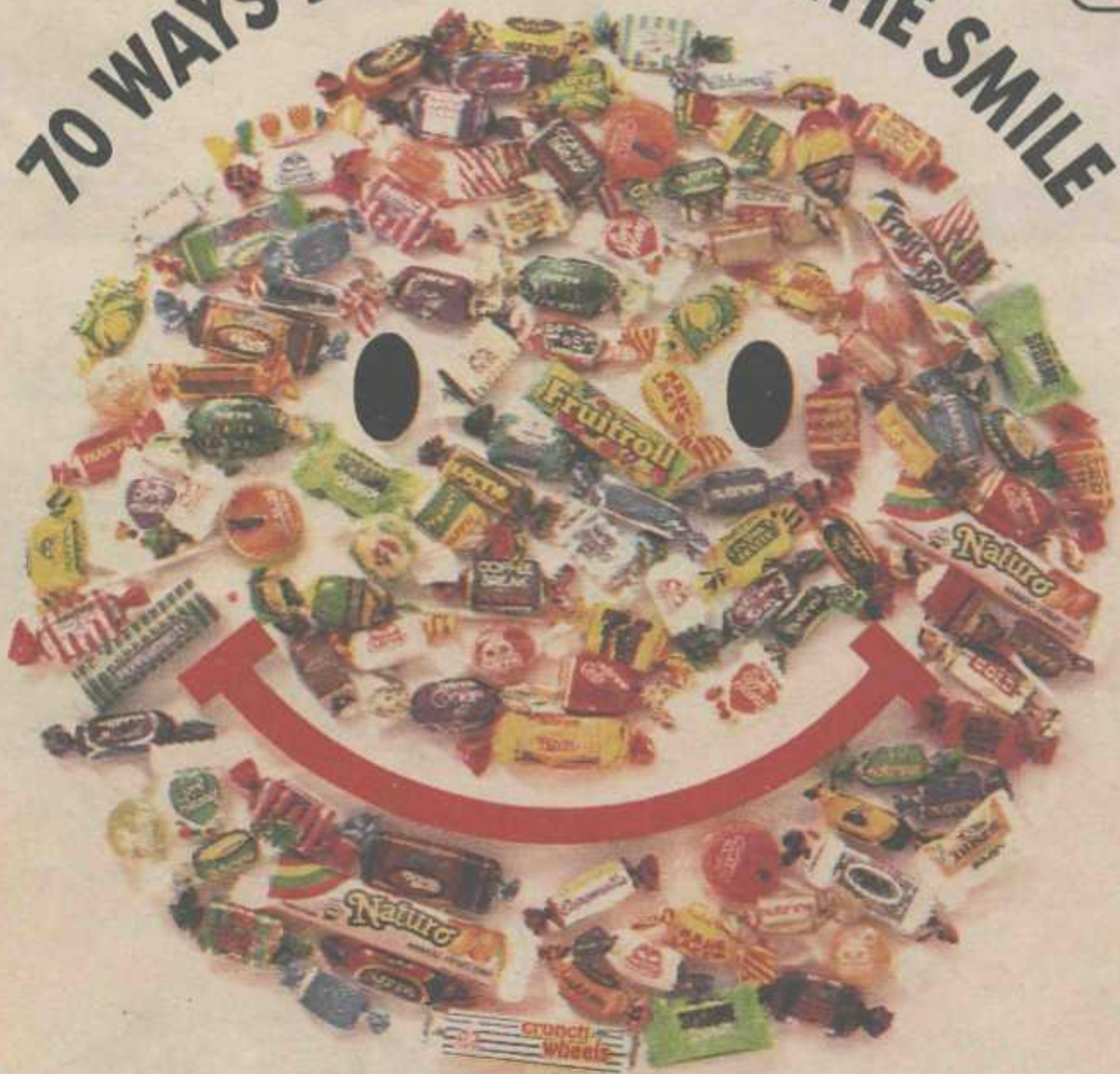
JAMS

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70 WAYS TO BRING ON THE SMILE



nutrine



The widest smile